Union Defence League

CONTEMPORARY IRELAND

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CONTEMPORARY IRELAND

By L. PAUL-DUBOIS

With an Introduction
By T. M. KETTLE, M.P.

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INTRODUCTION

I.

It is the French that have come closest to the secret of Ireland. De Beaumont, that great pupil of De Tocqueville, in 1839, Cardinal Perraud in 1869, painted our national life with the authoritative brush of masters. In addition to these we have had an unbroken line of studies, sketches, and monographs, in which Daryl, Béchaux, Le Roz, Fournier, Schindler, Potez, Filon, Flach, De Lavergne, and a cloud of other witnesses have said their word. Edouard Rod shaped the personal tragedy of Parnell into a novel; and in one of his most recent stories Paul Bourget has shuddered at the dresses of fashionable Dublin, and yielded with lyrical abandon to the drowsy and purple magic of the Western lotus-land. M. Paul-Dubois finds one half of the explanation of this old alliance in history, and the other in likeness of blood and temperament. In exchange for the swords of the Wild Geese, France sent us back priests, or at least the learning that turned Irish boys into priests. She sent too, in later and not less disastrous years, Hoche and Humbert; and both nations have good memories, and until a very little while ago they shared a common hatred. The Irish mind, is, moreover, like the French, "lucid, vigorous and positive," though less methodical, since it never had the happiness to undergo the Latin discipline. France and Ireland have been made to understand each other.

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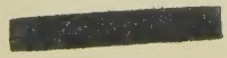

M. Paul-Dubois, then, has the advantage of temperamental sympathy, wise forerunners, and a long tradition. He had, further, the advantage of language, for it is perhaps only in French that Sociology can become scientific without ceasing to be human. His personal equipment is of the first order. Son of the late President of the Acadèmie des Beaux-Arts, son-in-law of the great Taine, and himself one of the chief officials of the Cour des Comptes, he is a member of the group which Brunetière's erudite enthusiasm gathered round the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Was it not Taine who originated the phrase "well-documented," and made it the touchstone of all books dealing with social or historical science? At all events it is in that spirit of thoroughness that M. Paul-Dubois has wished to write. The extent of his reading may be gathered from the references in his foot-notes. He paid more than one visit to Ireland, and had he but met some member of the Irish party—of which he writes with a harshness that is constantly in contradiction with itself—he might fairly claim to have met everybody. The Irish reader of his book may not be in entire agreement with his conclusions. To someone armed with special knowledge on this subject, his exposition may seem inadequate; to someone moved by special passion on that subject, his criticism may even prove an irritant; but, when all is said, his five hundred crowded pages represent the attempt of a mind, at once scientific and imaginative, to see Ireland steadily, and to see it whole. If it is comforting to be understood, it is also of some profit to be misunderstood in a friendly way. M. Paul-Dubois confesses on our behalf no sins that some one or other has not already shouted from the house-tops. Whatever he may have to say of the internal life of Ireland, his verdict on the international issue is given clearly

and definitely for Ireland and against England. His voice is raised for the Gaelic League, and against linguistic Imperialism; for the ploughed field, and against the grazing ranch; for Home Rule and against the Act of Union. One may wish to enter a *caveat* against this or that contention, but the book is founded not on prejudice, or unreasoned feeling, or raw idealism, but on a broad colligation of facts; and, with all reserves made, I believe that it will in due time take rank with the great studies of modern communities like Bodley's "France" and Münsterberg's "The Americans."

What then, is the Irish Question as seen by this sociologist, so inspired and so equipped? It is "an extreme case of social pathology," an instance of the phenomenon called arrested development. It is to history that one naturally turns for proof and illustration of this thesis; and if, as a great Shakespearean critic has said, tragedy is simply waste, the history of Ireland as it passes before us in M. Paul-Dubois' Introduction, marshalled in sombre and picturesque lines, is essential tragedy indeed. It matters nothing whether we approach it in the spirit of those who desire revenge or of those who desire reconstruction: the impression is the same. A civilisation shaken by Norse invasion before it had quite ripened; swept by Anglo-Norman invasion before it had quite recovered: a people plunged in an unimaginable chaos of races, religions, ideas, appetites, and provincialisms; brayed in the mortar without emerging as a consolidated whole; tenacious of the national idea, but unable to bring it to triumph; riven and pillaged by invasion without being conquered—how could such a people find leisure to grow up, or such a civilisation realise its full potentialities of development and discipline? There are writers who would have us burn our Irish

Histories. But the historical method imposes itself, not out of political passion, but by a mere scientific necessity, upon all students of contemporary social, or, indeed, spiritual problems. What is no doubt important is that the past should be studied by the social reformer not for its own sake but for the sake of the present, and from the point of view of the present. It is by this purpose that M. Paul-Dubois has been guided in his masterly Historical Introduction; and I do not know of any summary of the same length which traces the forces of current Irish life so clearly to their origins, and sets the fabric of fact, by which we are to-day confronted, in such true and vivid perspective. But over and beyond that, his Introduction possesses the interest of literature. The period since the Union has never been outlined with more telling or more human touches. O'Connell, the inventor of that "constitutional agitation" which is now the prime weapon of all democracies, passes away leaving "a great memory but not a great party." Young Ireland affords us the supreme instance of the antithetical temperaments ever to be found in Nationalist politics: Davis, the reformer, inspired by love of Ireland, and Mitchel, the revolutionist, inspired by hatred of England. And so through Famine and Fenianism we come down to the brilliant feebleness of Butt, and the icy passion of Parnell, who "had more followers than friends," and to the struggle of the Gaelic Renaissance for "psychological Home Rule."

II.

For this is, in last analysis, what M. Paul-Dubois takes to be the deep malady of Ireland: She has not gained the whole world, but she has come perilously near losing her own soul. A certain laxity of will, a certain mystical

scepticism in face of the material world, an eloquence, which, in depicting Utopias, exhausts the energy that might better be spent in creating them, a continual tendency to fall back on the alibi of the inner life, make Ireland the Hamlet, or still more, the Rudin of the nations. Is this to say that she is unfit for modern, economic civilisation ? By no means. M. Paul-Dubois, having sounded every weakness and surveyed every difficulty, ends with the belief that the forces of re-growth will prevail over the process of decay ; and that although Ireland's last cards are now on the table, she is capable, if she plays them well, not only of preserving an ancient people but of creating a new civilisation.

What is the path to this achievement ? First of all, under the present regime, England is the enemy. If Ireland is to realise herself, she must become mistress of her own hearth, her own purse, and her own cupboard. She does assuredly stand in urgent need of peace from politics, and so far her Unionist critics are right. There is indubitably a deep sense in which a nation's life begins where her politics end. People speak as if the outcry against Parliamentarianism were a novel and a unique thing. But, fifty years ago, Marx taught all realists to crack the shells of political formulas and parties, and judge them by the moral and economic kernel within. To-day you can pick up anywhere in Paris or Brussels half-a-dozen pamphlets called " The Crisis of Parliamentarianism," " The Absurdity of Parliamentarianism," or " The End of Parliamentarianism." But that peace from the purely political struggle, which is so indispensable if Ireland is to develop character and create material wealth, can come to her only as a result of political autonomy. Until autonomy is won—carrying with it a re-adjustment of taxation—" on the cause must go." And the politicians

who keep it going, whatever their special party or tactics, are playing the part of economic realists quite as effectively as any worker on the land or at the loom.

M. Paul-Dubois naturally devotes many chapters to the Land Question. He rightly treats it as a complexus of three questions, the tenure, the distribution, and the use of the land. The first two are being solved, in a fashion, at the expense of Irish rates and taxes, by the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board. Landlordism is dying, and dying meanly, "its last thought being of a bargain to be made." The edifice of Feudalism is being dismantled at a cost that raises a very real menace of national bankruptcy, but at all events the grim walls are coming down. But while the liberation of the Irish countryside from landlordism was necessary, it is not sufficient. The farmer must learn to use his land productively ; and so there must be a great development of agricultural education, leading up to a general system of "mixed farming." He must learn to combine ; and in this respect, at least as regards the small holders, Co-Operation possesses the secret of the future. He must come free of the egoism and pessimism which have remained in his blood since the Great Famine ; and nothing can expel these except the singing and dancing Gaelic League. But, even with all this accomplished, he will still be a snake-strangled Laocoon until he has in some wise reformed and mastered his Railways and Banks.

When we turn to the industrial condition of the country we find, since the Union, a steady degeneration of economic tissue. Population doubles between 1800 and 1841, but manufacture decays. The cotton workers of Belfast fall in number within that period from 27,000 to 12,000 ; and the factory hands of Dublin from 4,938 to 682. The

consumption of luxuries, an excellent test of wealth, shows an immediate decline, tobacco falling in thirty years by 37 per cent. and wine by 47 per cent. Loss of trade follows loss of the flag. London, having become the political centre of gravity of Ireland, tends also to become her financial and commercial centre of gravity. There is a diminution of the productive, and a great increase of the parasitic classes. The home market slips away from the home manufacturer; a sort of mania of exchange takes possession of the country; and she ends by reaching a higher figure per unit of her population of exports and imports than any other European nation, paying ruinous tribute on both processes to the Shylocks of transit. It is a situation too sadly familiar to us all. M. Paul-Dubois' remedy, too, is familiar; it is the programme of the men of 1779 and of the Industrial Pioneers of to-day: Use at home as many as you need of the things that are made at home, and make at home as many as possible of the things that are used at home. He neither anticipates nor desires any notable development of industry on the great scale, but looks for the prosperity of Ireland to progressive agriculture, and the smaller rural industries that come naturally to cluster around it.

Such is, in bare outline, the diagnosis of Ireland made by this detached and sympathetic student. He touches upon many other subjects, upon that of Clericalism and Anti-Clericalism with particular delicacy and insight. One may regret that, with his French experience, he does not discuss such problems as that now rising very definitely on the political horizon: Does Ireland stand to gain or to lose by Protection? One may find a fault of line or of colour here and there, or chance on an irritating phrase. But on the whole and as a whole this is the best book that has been written in recent years on

the problems of Ireland. The meaner journalism may seek in it for nothing better than party capital. But the worker in any Irish movement, who possesses the supreme wisdom of humility, and who had rather be bettered than flattered, will be glad to have seen himself in M. Paul-Dubois' mirror. His last message is one of hope. He may, as his Conclusion shows, have underrated the resolution of Ireland to secure integral Home Rule—a National Government being a delicate and intricate machine which cannot be set working in halves. He may, by times, have seemed to forget that there are many kinds of Conciliation, that, for instance, an infallible method of conciliating a tiger is to allow oneself to be devoured. But, as between us and our rulers, he gives his verdict, on the evidence, for Ireland and against England. And he foreshadows a possible unification of all progressive parties on the Irish side, a tacit Concordat under which, on the sole condition that the national idea be not submerged or the national flag lowered in surrender, all progressive parties would come to regard themselves as but different regiments of the same Army of Advance. May that hope come true !

T. M. KETTLE.

This book is an English translation of *L'Irlande Contemporaire*, Paris, 1907. M. Paul-Dubois desires to express his gratitude for great personal kindness during two visits to Ireland, and invaluable help in his studies of Irish life to Mr. T. P. Gill, The Rev. F. J. Hogan, D.D. and the authorities of Maynooth College, and Sir Horace Plunkett. He wishes further to pay a tribute to the memory of that brilliant writer on Irish affairs, the late J. F. Taylor, K.C., and to say how much he has profited by the counsel and assistance of the late Rt. Hon. W. E. H. Lecky.

The Editor wishes to record his particular indebtedness, as regards the Historical Introduction, to Mr. A. E. Clery, LL.B., and as regards the remainder of the book to Mr. J. M. Hone, and Mr. G. F. H. Berkeley.

It has been thought well to add in an Appendix a few Notes, mainly of a statistical character. T. M. K.

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I.—BEFORE THE UNION

We must look to the past if we would understand the present. Hence, before we approach the study of contemporary Ireland, it is well to turn our gaze backwards and try to comprehend the broader facts of the history of that country. We must look to the historical causes of which the existing condition of affairs is the immediate outcome. When we do so, two questions at once suggest themselves. How comes it that though it has been so often crushed, the Irish nation still survives; and yet, though able to survive, has never been able to attain its freedom? And again, how is it that the English, a people long famous for liberal principles and practical common sense, have failed so miserably in the task of conciliating Ireland? Why have their efforts in Ireland borne no other crop than one of unprofitable hatred, with the result that after seven centuries and a half, that country is to-day an element of disintegration, and a dead weight in the British Empire? What, in a word, has caused—to employ a strong term—the bankruptcy of English rule in Ireland?

It is difficult to give even a brief sketch of the history of Ireland. It is no exaggeration to say that Irish history is a book but half open. Students of Celtic and archæologists are still engaged in preparing the way for the historian. Many Irish Manuscripts, records and state papers dealing with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as with earlier epochs, have not yet seen

the light.[1] These alone could afford us accurate information not only as to the social conditions, but as to some of the most important public events in those periods. It is partly on this account, though the fact is also in large part due to the passions and prejudices of the two nations, that on the ever-burning question of Irish history, Englishmen and Irishmen put forward two widely different views. The two positions are diametrically opposed and each is tainted with extravagance.

In the view of Englishmen, the history of Ireland is that of a backward people engaged in a stupid revolt against the genius of English civilisation, and all the sacrifices which the English in their generosity make for the development of "that part of the United Kingdom" meet with no better return than crime, violence and ingratitude. Irish history is the story of a barbarous people, incapable either of understanding or accepting the "lustre of English liberty," as Cromwell put it in his

[1] See on the history of Ireland the following general works:—G. Keating (1570-1640), *History of Ireland* (Irish Texts Society edition. Campion, *History of Ireland* (published in 1633 by Sir John Ware). Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, 1689. MacGeoghegan, *Histoire d'Irlande*, Paris, 1758-1763. Leland, *History of Ireland*, 1773. Plowden, *An Historical Review of the State of Ireland from the Invasion to the Union*, 1803. Hallam, *Constitutional History of England*, 1827. Thomas Moore. *Memoirs of Captain Rock*, 1824. Daniel O'Connell, *A Memoir of Ireland, Native and Saxon*, 1843. Froude, *History of England*, London, 1856-1870. Goldwin Smith, *Irish History and Character*, Oxford and London, 1861. A. M. Sullivan, *The Story of Ireland*, Dublin, 1867, John Mitchel, *History of Ireland, from the treaty of Limerick*, New York, 1868. Stuart Mill, *England and Ireland*, London, 1868. Froude. *The English in Ireland in the 18th Century*, London, 1872. W. H. Lecky, *History of England in the 18th Century*, London, 1883. Richey. *A Short History of the Irish People*, Dublin, 1887. W. A. O'Connor, *History of the Irish People*, Manchester, 1884. Emily Lawless, *Ireland*, London, 1887. Ball, *Historical Review of the Legislative Systems operative in Ireland*, London, 1883. *Two Centuries of Irish History, with an Introduction by J. Bryce*, London, 1888. Duke of Argyll, *Irish Nationalism*, London, 1893. W. O'Connor Morris, *Ireland*, 1494-1868, Cambridge, 1898. T. D. Ingram, *A Critical Examination of Irish History*, London, 1900. J. P. Gannon, *A Review of Irish History*, London, 1900. Rev. E. A. D'Alton, *History of Ireland*, Vol. I., Dublin 1903, and Vol. II, 1906.

Cf. G. de Beaumont, *l'Irlande sociale, politique et religieuse*, 4th édition, Paris, 1840. Cardinal Perraud, *Etudes sur l'Irlande contemporaine*, Paris, 1862. J. Flach, *Considérations sur l'histoire politique de l'Irlande*, Paris, 1885.

proclamation in 1649. The true explanation of what has happened is to be found in the essential weakness of Irish character, which has been found wanting, when put to the trial in the struggle for life. English misdeeds, if such there ever were, have been repaired long ago. And when prescription has been running its course for a century it is criminal to re-open the case and stir up slumbering passions by recalling forgotten wrongs. Hence Irish history is a subject to which Englishmen do not like to turn their minds. No good, say they, can come of it. It is not a matter worthy of scientific study.[2] As a result, not only is Irish history not taught to English children, but it was not until recently even allowed to be taught in the National Schools of Ireland.

The attitude of Irishmen upon this matter is exactly the opposite. To them Irish history is their consolation; their greatest hope; it is always before their eyes, always upon their lips. They live in the past. Everything around them speaks of other days. Round towers, ruins, fallen abbeys, ancient castles, nay, the very desolation of the country itself, bring memories of times gone by. England sees in the faults and vices of Irishmen the true explanation of their misfortunes; Ireland deems the cruelty and tyranny of the English to be the real and only cause of her unhappiness. As Englishmen brazenly shut their eyes to their national misdeeds, so Irishmen complacently shut their eyes to their own shortcomings, and never weary of looking back upon that golden age of Erin, when, whilst England was yet steeped in pagan barbarism, the Irish were the protectors and the pioneers of western civilisation.

In considering the circumstances of Ireland, the influence

[2] "Ireland has never realised that unity and continuity of national life which alone can furnish a worthy theme for history" (George C. Broderick, *Political Studies*, London, 1879, with reference to Froude's work, *The English in Ireland*) *Cf.* page 354: "It is time for us to have done with fanciful and allegorical pictures of Ireland as a forlorn maiden, brooding helplessly over her bygone wrongs, pointing out the wounds that are now finally healed, and clanking the chains that have been struck off for ever."

exercised by its geographical position is an all-important fact. If we take them singly we can find a parallel elsewhere, for each one of the evils under which Ireland has suffered. The soil of Ireland is not less fertile than that of Holland. It is not more bloodstained than that of Flanders. Distinctions of race are not sharper in Ireland than in Switzerland. And whilst religious persecutions have in Ireland been carried out with dire cruelty, yet the country remains Catholic to-day in spite of them. But what makes the case of Ireland worse than that of any other country, even Poland, is the fact that all these evils have afflicted her simultaneously, and have continued to do so, without intermission, for seven centuries. For this result the geographical position of the country must be held in a great measure responsible. It lies far away by itself to the extreme west of Europe, with Britain, as it were, for its prison wall. Thus, the interposition of England cuts off Ireland from the current of European civilisation and intercepts all commerce, whether spiritual or material, with other countries. "You have always been like a high garden wall standing between us and the sun," said George Canning's daughter, Lady Clanricarde, to an Englishman. If England has all the advantages of an insular position, Ireland has all the disadvantages. It need only be added that its proximity to England prevents the English people, in the interests of their own peace, from ever leaving Ireland out of account. It was then in the nature of things that of these two sister countries with interests sharply opposed, the larger island should exercise a preponderating influence upon the smaller.

I.—Early Ireland.

One result of Ireland's isolated position in early times was that Cæsar's legionaries never set foot in the country. Later on, indeed, Ireland came to a greater or less degree under the influence of Roman literature; but Roman law never

laid its enduring mark upon the country. Had it been otherwise, her history must have been far different. Being outside the ambit of Roman civilisation, Ireland developed from within upon her own lines. And it was at once her good and her evil fortune that she thus retained her distinctively "Celtic" character entirely unimpaired.

The early history of Ireland, as we find it in the annals and mythological poems, gives us a picture of diverse peoples combating and succeeding one another—sons of Partholan or of Nemedh, Tuatha-de-Danann, "Fomorians" and Firbolgs. But from a time immediately preceding the Christian era, the "Celts," together with a certain intermingling of aborigines, are found in possession of the island. These were the Gaels,[3] who belonged to that great Celtic race, that had once been masters of all Europe, but had been gradually driven back by the advance of Roman power and by Germanic incursions. According to legend these Gaels were the descendants of Miledh or Milesius, who had crossed over from Spain a thousand years before the Christian era. We learn from the same source that not less than one hundred and fifty kings of Milesian stock reigned over Ireland. This much is certain, at any rate, that in the first centuries of our era, there existed in Ireland a civilisation that had reached an advanced stage of development. To the study of this civilisation the ablest students of Celtic archæology and Celtic philology have been devoting their researches for half a century.[4]

3 According to another theory (the most probable one), the Gaels belonged to the Nordic or Teutonic race. It has also been maintained that the mass of the Irish people are of Iberian or Scythian stock, and that the Gaels only mingled with this earlier population and imposed their language upon them.

4 We can only send the reader first of all to the works of the uncontested master of Celtic studies, M. d'Arbois de Jubainville, then to those of MM. Gaidoz, Loth, Ernault, Dottin, etc. *Cf.* O'Curry, *Ancient Irish History*, Dublin, 1861; *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish* (edited by W. R. Sullivan, Dublin, 1873). H. S. Maine, *Ancient Law*, London, 1861; *Early History of Institutions*, London, 1875; *Early Law and Customs*, London, 1883. Zimmer, *Keltische*

The most striking characteristic of this society was its tribal organisation. The social cell, standing next in order above the family, was the tribe, which consisted of a group of families, a body of freemen connected by a real or imaginary tie of kinship, who bore the same name, lived together in a defined portion of territory, and owned a certain number of serfs and slaves. These communities were rural, for there were no towns. The land belonged to the tribe; part of it was grazed in common, and the rest allotted from time to time between the free men. Yet private property was not unknown. It existed in regard to cattle, which were then the chief wealth, and even in regard to land. The chief had a private demesne appertaining to his office, which he farmed out to tenants, who paid him rent in kind. The chieftaincy was elective, but was confined to a single ruling family. In matters of politics, the "tribe" was of less importance than the "clan," or group of tribes, and the clans themselves were grouped into the five provinces[5] or kingdoms, which were subject at least in name to the *Ard-Righ*, or High King of Ireland. The High King, however, like the Holy Roman Emperor of the middle ages, had little real authority, for he had neither civil jurisdiction nor military power. But he had a royal residence, the famous palace of Tara; and there in a sort of *Agora*, were held the triennial festival and games of the *Feis*.

Wars were carried on unceasingly, now between tribe and tribe, now between kingdom and kingdom. Yet again there were revolts against the authority of the *Ard-Righ*. In the end the position of Ard-Righ came to belong exclusively to the powerful family of the Hy-Niall,

Studio, Berlin, 1881-1884. Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Bishop of Clonfert, *Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars*, Dublin, 1892. Sophie Bryant, *Celtic Ireland*, London, 1889. Eleanor Hull, *Pagan Ireland*, and *Early Christian Ireland*, London and Dublin, 1904 and 1905. Lady Ferguson, *The Irish Before the Conquest*, London, 1868. Douglas Hyde, *A Literary History of Ireland*, London, 1903.

5 Ulster, Connacht, Munster, Leinster and Meath.

or O'Neills. From time to time monarchs of exceptional capacity, such as Conn of the Hundred Battles,[6] Cormac mac Art,[7] and Niall of the Nine Hostages,[8] succeeded in making this authority a reality. In the seventh century Scotland was conquered by the Irish Gaels, and for many years afterwards they continued to invade Britain, and even extended their incursions upon the continent to the foot of the Alps.

At the commencement of the historical period the social condition of Ireland seems to have been already tending towards decay. Yet we have abundant evidence of the high degree of perfection which its civilisation had already attained. First, there are the laws or customs which the Judges, called *Brehons*, collected and interpreted. In them, as we may see from the *Seanchus Mor*, the subtlety and imaginative fertility of the Celtic spirit gave itself free play. Then, the delicate craftsmanship and purity of taste displayed in early Celtic ornaments is well known. From the Pagan period we have torques, brooches, gorgets and combs, with their strange and characteristic spiral ornamentation. Not inferior to them in beauty and chastity of design are those marvellous examples of Christian art, the Tara Brooch, the Ardagh Chalice, the Cross of Cong, and St. Patrick's Crozier, not to speak of the wonderful illuminations of the Book of Kells and other manuscripts. But it was in its literature that early Ireland showed its greatest intellectual power. As they have come down to us for the most part in manuscripts of late date the epic poems and legends, the sagas of the pagan period, and of the mythological, the heroic and the Ossianic cycles,[9] are not less valuable from a literary than

6 123-157 A.D.

7 227-266 A.D.

8 379-405. In his reign the future St. Patrick was borne into slavery in Ireland. His successor, Dathi (405-428), was the last pagan king of Ireland.

9 Of the extent of this literature, still in existence, O'Curry says that the historical stories would occupy 4,000 pages, the stories and poems of the Ossianic (or Fenian) cycle 3,000, and the other tales and stories 5,000. As to Irish music see A. H. Grattan-Flood, *A History of Irish Music*, Dublin, 1905.

from a philological and archæological point of view. They comprise both prose and verse, stories and poems, history and fiction. In them are found mingled primitive rudeness and exquisite delicacy, an oriental imaginativeness and a strong common sense. Exhibiting as they do a combination of freshness of feeling, delicacy of sentiment, and at the same time perfect naturalness, these literary remains have proved an inspiration to the greatest modern poets, to Tennyson and Swinburne for instance, in our own time. It was from Ireland that Europe received her first love-songs. It was the Irish who invented rhyme, in all its varied forms, single or double, final, initial or medial, including the most elaborate assonances and alliterations. The Ossianic poems exhibit, under an extraordinary perfection of form, all the subtle rhythms and lyrical harmonies of *vers libre*. And it is remarkable that we never find in the bardic literature that exuberance of diction and exaggeration of form that often grates upon us in the later epics. They show, on the contrary, as we are told by Dr. Sigerson, "classic reserve in thought, form and expression." It is no exaggeration to say, with this learned Irishman,[10] that the literary sceptre, once wielded by Rome, fell in later times to Celtic Ireland.

The introduction of Christianity into Ireland must next occupy our attention. If we may believe tradition, a Celt from Gaul, named Patricius or Succat, had been brought captive to Ireland by the *Ard-Righ*, Niall of the Nine Hostages, but had escaped and been educated on the continent. Thence, in the year 432, he was sent as Bishop to convert Ireland. Where a former missionary named Palladius had failed, Patricius succeeded miraculously, and under the name of Saint Patrick, he is venerated to the present day as "the Apostle of Ireland." It is difficult in these matters to distinguish history from

[10] George Sigerson, *Bards of the Gael and Gall*, which contains admirable translations into English of early Celtic poetry.

legend.[11] It seems probable that at the beginning of the fifth century Ireland was already in part converted to Christianity. Missionaries, captors, and traders from Britain, had brought about this result. There may even have been Irish bishops before St. Patrick. It is clear, at any rate, that the ancient paganism was already in its decline, and lacked the power to resist the new spirit. Ireland became Christian without a struggle, and soon earned the name of "The Island of Saints and Doctors."

The organisation of the Christian Church in Ireland proceeded more or less upon monastic lines, modified by the clan system. Churches and monasteries sprang up throughout the country, whose abbots being, like the chiefs of clans, each independent of the other, possessed far greater power than the bishops. These latter were, in fact, not uncommonly ordinary monks, subject to the control of the abbots. Rome being far away, forms peculiar to the country naturally came into being in ecclesiastical ritual and practice. Such were the costume of the priests, the shape of the tonsure, and the date for the observance of Easter. They may be compared to those which certain Eastern Churches are permitted to employ in our own time. Some of them continued in use for many centuries.[12] The Gaelic Church of Ireland is, therefore, from the very beginning to be distinguished from both the Gallo-Roman and the Anglo-Saxon Churches. The wide extension of literary culture,

[11] As to the Patrician Question see among recent works H. Zimmer, *The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland*, London, 1902 (an English translation from the German text). Zimmer's thesis is that Succat, Patrick, and Palladius are the same person, who was sent by Pope Celestine, not to convert the country, since it was already Christian, but to assure its obedience to Rome and to crush the nascent heresy of Pelagianism. His mission was a failure.

[12] On the primitive church in Ireland, see Professor George Stokes, *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, London, 1886. H. Zimmer, *The Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland*, London, 1902; *Pelagius in Ireland*, Berlin, 1901. Moran, *Early Irish Church*, Dublin, 1864. Mgr. Healy, *Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars*, Dublin, 1892. Eleanor Hull, *Early Christian Ireland*, Dublin, 1905. Ozanam, *La Civilisation chretienne au cinquieme siecle* (Paris, 1862-1865). Montalembert, *Les Moines Occident*, Paris, 1860-1867. John Healy, *The Ancient Irish Church*, London, 1892.

together with the missionary enthusiasm which characterised the religious movement in Ireland, place the Irish Church far in advance of either of those just mentioned. Schools were started everywhere for the teaching of Literature and Science, Latin and Greek, Philosophy and Theology. Libraries were erected on all sides, where scholars received books and food free of cost. Students came in pursuit of learning from all parts of Europe to the schools at Clonfert, Lismore, Bangor and Durrow. Seven hundred attended the school at Armagh, which had been founded by St. Patrick himself. Alcuin was trained at the University of Clonmacnoise, the deserted ruins of which still stand upon the banks of the Shannon. Sedulius, in the fifth century, founded with his *Carmen Paschale* a school of Latin poetry in Ireland. Aileran, in the sixth, knew Hebrew, and cites Origen and Philo in a treatise on the mystical significance of the names in the genealogy of Christ. St. Vergil (Fergal), an Irish Bishop of Salzburg, maintained, in the year 745, the rotundity of the earth and the existence of the antipodes, a doctrine for which indeed he incurred condemnation. Dicuil, the Geographer, examines and criticises all the ancient authorities in his work, *De Mensura Orbis Terrarum*, published in 825 A.D. This book contains an account of Ireland. From the fifth to the eighth century Ireland was the refuge and the home of modern culture, and may truly be said to have saved European civilisation in the days of the barbarian incursions.[13]

But she did more. From the sixth to the eighth century the Irish were the apostles of Europe and continued to send missionaries unceasingly throughout the whole

[13] In 665 A.D. the Irish monk Augustin wrote a treatise on the wonders of the Gospel which was long attributed to the Bishop of Hippo. Cummian, Bishop of Clonfert, shows high scientific and canonical attainments in his *Epistle on the Paschal Question* (seventh century). Sedulius, Abbot of Kildare (not to be confounded with the author of the *Carmen Paschale*), wrote a treatise on Grammar, a treatise on government, and many Latin poems, about the year 820. Dungal explained astronomy to Charlemagne in a treatise *De Duplici Solis Eclipsi*.

continent. Irish monks travelled from the Hebrides in the West, far into Germany in the East, and as far South as the Apennines ; they built churches, recalled the people to their religious allegiance, and restored Christianity, which, since the decay of Roman power, seemed on the point of being extinguished by the Lombard and the Visigoth. St. Columba (or Columcille) (521-597) founded the celebrated monastery of Iona, and converted the Picts. St. Columban travelled through Gaul and founded monasteries from Nantes on one side to the Vosges on the other. He founded Luxeuil, Fontaines, Annegray, and passing through Switzerland, crossed the Alps, and built the abbey of Bobbio in Lombardy, where he ended his days in the year 615. His disciple, St. Gall, established a monastery near the lake of Constance, on the site of the town that still bears his name. Saint Killian converted Franconia and Thuringia and was martyred at Wurzburg in the year 689. Charlemagne surrounded himself with Irish monks at Aix-la-Chapelle. Charles the Bold brought Scotus Erigena, the founder of scholastic philosophy, to Paris. In the seventh century, Ireland gave two bishops to Strasburg, without counting St. Fridolin, the first bishop of Alsace, in the sixth. St. Frigidian (or San Frediano), Bishop of Lucca, in the sixth century, who converted the Lombards, was an Irishman. And in the ninth century the first bishop of Fiesole was St. Donatus, a native of the same country. " For a time it seemed as if . . . . . Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mould the destinies of the Churches of the West . ." says the English historian, J. R. Green.[14]

II.—The Invasions.[1]

Such were the glorious beginnings of Irish history, Pagan and Christian, the splendid prelude that was to have so

[14] *Short History of the English People*, p. 21. This missionary activity explains why we find to-day so many valuable Irish MSS. in continental libraries at Paris, Basle, Koln, Vienna, Milan, etc.

[1] On this period (ninth to the fifteenth century) see, besides the

mournful and terrible a sequel. The first blow struck against Irish cvilisation came from the invasions of the Northmen at the beginning of the ninth century. The Danes (as the Irish historians styled them) first occupied the sea-board. They founded towns—a species of community hitherto unknown in Ireland. They pierced their way into the interior, destroyed schools, and plundered churches and monasteries. The whole of Ireland soon fell under the sway of the Vikings. Manuscripts were burnt. Science perished, and morals were debased, even in the church itself. Yet the Gaels gradually regained their position, and at the end of the tenth century, King Malachy inflicted upon the " Danes " their first important reverse. At the beginning of the eleventh Brian Boroimhe (Boru), who had wrested the supreme power from the Hy-Niall, routed the Danes decisively at Clontarf on Good Friday, in the year 1014. On that glorious field, however, King Brian, his son and his grandson, perished together. Both King Brian, the Alfred of Ireland, and his predecessor, King Malachy, had done much to revive culture, and, as soon as Danish power was broken, literature and the arts regained their former position. Kenneth O'Hartigan (circ. 975), O'Flynn and MacLiag were the precursors of the renaissance. Scribes and annalists like Tighearnach (circ. 1088) resumed their labours. Everything that could be found of the older writings was brought together in books such as those two books, " The Book of Leinster " (twelfth century) and the *Leabhar na h-Uidhre*, the work of the scribe Maelmuire (circ. 1106), which are the most ancient among the famous manuscripts of Ireland. The Gospels were written down in the " Book of Durrow," the " Book of Armagh," and many others, that have come down to us from the same period. Ireland once again began to send

works already mentioned, *Topography and History of the English Conquest of Ireland*, edited by F. J. Furnivall, London, 1896 (see *l'Expugnatio Hibernica*). Sir John Davies, *Discovery of the True Causes why Ireland was never subdued*, 1612 (published in 1786 in a collection of Historical Tracts). *Calendar of State Papers.*

missionaries to the continent. Marianus founded the monastery of Ratisbon, and Irish monks penetrated even into Hungary and Poland. There was a revival, an echo of the golden age of Ireland. But unhappily the Anglo-Saxon invasions were soon to come upon her and put an end to all such hopes.

Had Ireland been left to herself she would, in all human probability, have succeeded, notwithstanding her decadence, in establishing political unity under a military chief.[2] Had the country been brought into peaceful contact with continental civilisation, it must have advanced along the path of modern progress. Even if it had been conquered by a powerful nation, it would at least have participated in the progress of the conquering power. But none of these things happened. England, whose political and social development had been hastened by the Norman Conquest, desired to extend her influence to Ireland. She wished, as Froude strangely tells us, " to complete the work of civilisation happily begun by the Danes." But in actual fact, she only succeeded in trammeling the development of Irish society, and maintaining in the country an appalling condition of decadent stagnation, as the result of three centuries and a half of intermittent invasions, never followed by conquest.

The first Anglo-Norman expedition penetrated into Ireland in the year 1169. It was a private adventure led by Richard, Earl of Pembroke, surnamed " Strongbow," who had been invited by Dermot Mac Murrough, King of Leinster, to aid him in a war against Roderick O'Connor, the Ard-Righ of Ireland. Some months afterwards King Henry II. of England crossed over in person, fortified with the celebrated Bull containing the grant of Ireland, a document, to put the case at its weakest, of doubtful authenticity. He spent Christmas in Dublin, and had himself recognised as over-lord of Ireland, placing this new title after those of Duke of

[2] *Cf.* H. S. Maine, *Early History of Institutions*, London, 1875, p. 54.

Normandy, and Duke of Acquitaine. Then " he departed out of Ireland without striking one blow, or building one castle . . . neither left he behind him one true subject more than those that he found there at his first coming over . . ." [3] But the crucial step had been taken. The English had established a foothold in Ireland. The invaders occupied the eastern edge of the island, which they styled the Pale, or English "march," and they gradually covered it with castles and organised it on a feudal basis. For the next three centuries and a half the English invasion continued without interruption. New colonists and adventurers kept streaming over, without intermission, to take the place of those who had abandoned the enterprise, or else gone over to the enemy, and thus the wound in the nation's side was never permitted to heal up. The Irish replied by counter attacks under the leadership of Aodh O'Connor, Art Mac Murrough, Donald O'Neill, and the Scotsman Edward Bruce. The Pale varied in extent in accordance with the turn taken by affairs. Yet, even when its area was greatest, it was not more than one-third that of the whole island. English power did not extend outside it. As regards the territory that lay beyond it English public policy was confined to fostering dissensions among the Irish and inducing the chiefs of individual clans, by fear or favour, to recognise English suzerainty and accept feudal titles and privileges in return. Thus, on the one hand, the Irish were so divided and so much inferior to the invaders in military attainments, that they could never hope to conquer them and drive them out once for all. On the other hand, the English never carried their military operations to a conclusion. They satisfied their taste for adventure in the Crusades, their ambition in the French wars, and in these and in the Wars of the Roses they exhausted their resources. Ireland they neither subdued nor conquered. A war without truce and without issue

3 Sir John Davies, *Discovery* (1612).

continued in Ireland for three centuries, and was waged "with all the ferocity without the finality of conquest." [4]

Far from conquering Ireland, the English had considerable difficulty in maintaining their own position there, and keeping their garrison in control. Two causes conspired, in the nature of things, to deplete continually the numbers of this "garrison," so that it had to be continually "planted" and "replanted." Planters never settled in Ireland without the intention of returning. They were never willing to accept Ireland as their country for good and all; and after spending a few years in it, many left the island. Many also were absentees. Edward III. had already to complain of absenteeism in 1295, and Richard II. imposed a special tax on it shortly afterwards. Moreover, those who remained and made Ireland their home, were speedily assimilated by their surroundings, so that at the end of two or three generations, they became Irish themselves. They took Irish wives and surrounded themselves with Irish retainers. They spoke Irish and wore the Irish costume. They had their bards and their brehons, and were, in fact, to all appearance, Irish Chieftains. Had the country been really conquered, this "Irishisation" would have been a most fortunate turn of affairs. But it constituted a source of serious danger to the partial and precarious occupation effected by the English government, and hence that government naturally did everything in its power to hinder the process and to prevent the fusion of English and Irish. This object was especially aimed at in the famous statute of Kilkenny (1367 A.D.) by which Edward III. forbade Englishmen to marry Irishwomen, to form alliances with the Irish, to live according to Irish laws, to use the Irish language, to entertain Irishmen, to take Irish surnames, or to wear a moustache after the Irish fashion. All these things were prohibited under pain of death or imprisonment. Such laws were intended to prevent the English from

4 Sir Horace Plunkett, *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 57.

sinking to the level of the Irish. It was also sought to prevent the Irish from raising themselves to the level of the English. Hence, not only were the Irish not made subject to the feudal law, but, except as a special favour, they were refused its benefits. An "Irish enemy," as he was called, was treated as an outlaw and left a prey to the brutality of the tax-gatherers. To kill an Irishman or violate an Irish woman was no crime in the eye of the law. All these measures, however, proved a complete failure. The English in Ireland became "Irished" by mere force of circumstances, and there grew up gradually a people intermediate between the native Irish and the English of the Pale. This third nationality was composed of the Anglo-Irish, "Old English" or "degenerate English" (as the servants of the government styled them) who being at all times turbulent and disloyal to the English sovereign, gained the name of being "more Irish than the Irish themselves," *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*. At their head stood certain great Anglo-Norman families, several of whom had been settled in Ireland since the eleventh century. These families occupied an almost regal position, possessing immense properties and innumerable dependents. Such were the Fitzgeralds or Geraldines, whose head was the Earl of Kildare; the Butlers, Lords of Ormond; the Desmonds, the de Courceys and the de Burghs (Burkes). Each family sought to gain the upper hand. They made alliances by treaty or by marriage with the great Gaelic chiefs, such as the O'Neills, the O'Connors, the O'Donnells or the O'Moores. Ireland was devastated by their unending contentions.

The king himself had no control over them. He was no more master of his Irish garrison than of Ireland itself. "If all Ireland cannot rule Kildare, then let Kildare rule all Ireland," said Henry VII. at a later date. There was indeed in Ireland a Lord Lieutenant who carried on the government for the king, or a "Deputy," who took the place of the Lord Lieutenant. But whoever he might be, in most cases he soon fell under suspicion,

and did not hold the post for long. There were no less than ninety-five governors in the course of the fourteenth century, and no less than eighty-five in the course of the fifteenth. The inevitable result of all this was that English influence gradually diminished and Gaelic influence increased. By the end of the fifteenth century the "Pale" had been reduced to a narrow strip of territory around Dublin twenty leagues in length and eight in breadth. The great lords were almost independent and treated the government with contempt. They exacted "tribute," or "black rent," from the lesser chiefs, and not infrequently pushed their military expeditions up to the very gates of Dublin itself. Outside the Pale the ancient Gaelic society, organised on the clan system and governed by the Brehon laws, continued to exist with but slight modification. Had the Irish at this time possessed a leader like Brian or Malachy, the English would soon have been shown the door. But the English invasion had had the effect of preventing the bringing about of national unity. It had "fatally arrested the possible evolution of a truly national kingdom and national type of culture." [5] Yet after three centuries and a half the wave of invasion seemed now to have spent its force; the invader seemed on the point of departing from the country for good. All progress had come to a stand-still. The English had neither permitted the country to develop on its own lines, nor been able to develop it themselves, and the solution of what was henceforth to be known as the Irish question appeared to be further off than ever.

III.—The Conquest (1495-1603).[1]

When, with the accession of the Tudors, the power of the nobles was broken and the English throne became a firmly

5 James Bryce, *Two Centuries of Irish History*, London, 1888, p. 15.

1 On this period see especially *Ireland under Elizabeth*, by Don Philip O'Sullivan Bear (translated from the Latin original, 1621), Dublin, 1903. *The State Papers* (Times of the Tudors), edited by H. C. Hamilton. Sir John Davies, *Discovery of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued*, 1612. Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and*

established despotism, there came a change in English policy in regard to Ireland. The King's Government set itself to make the royal power supreme in the Pale, and to effect a real conquest of the whole island. Even under the new conditions, however, the Government acted only when compelled by force of circumstances, and their conduct was characterised at once by so little steadfastness of purpose and such extreme cruelty that the conquest took two centuries to accomplish. It was achieved only as the result of a series of wars, crimes, and massacres, which left the people prostrate, thinned in numbers, and filled for ever after with an undying hatred.

It is to be set down to the credit of the Tudors, that there was at any rate one among them who sought in some respects to govern Ireland well. It is a strange coincidence that this should have been Henry VIII., who was at the very same time sowing the seeds of so much future trouble by introducing the Reformation into Ireland. Under his predecessor, Henry VII., English arms, for the first time for many a long day, had proved victorious in Ireland, under the banner of Gerald, Earl of Kildare, a noble who had come over to the King's side; and the army, profiting by its success, had pushed its way into the most distant parts of Connacht.

Henry VIII., being thus confident of the future, determined to win the sovranty of Ireland by peaceful means. He first set about establishing his authority over the nobles of the Pale. He showed the same harshness towards the great barons of Ireland as towards the great lords of England. He twice cast Gerald, Earl of Kildare, son of the Earl just mentioned, into the Tower of London; and in 1534, after the rebellion of Lord Thomas Fitzgerald (called "Silken Thomas") he put him to death

Ireland, London, 1577. The Carew Papers, edited by J. S. Brewer and William Bullen in the *Calendars of State Papers*. Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, 1691. *Annals of the Four Masters*, 1636. *Pacata Hibernia*, by Sir George Carew, 1633. F. Moryson, *History of Ireland*, 1599-1603, Dublin, 1735. R. Payne, *Brief Description of Ireland*, London, 1589. Richard Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, London, 1885.

with five of his uncles, although he had promised to spare his life. "The King would never rest until he had had the blood of the Geraldine race," said the Irish. Towards the Gaelic population of Ireland, on the contrary, his conduct was characterised by great mildness; he sought to conciliate them, ordered that their customs should be respected, and hoped to found his power in Ireland on an aristocracy of Celtic race. The great Irish chiefs, Conn O'Neill and Brian O'Connor, had taken up arms to avenge their relatives, the Geraldines, but Henry VIII., once he had suppressed the rising, won them over to his side, received their submission, granted them lands—lands taken from the monasteries—and gave them English in addition to their Celtic titles. Conn O'Neill became Earl of Tyrone; Hugh O'Donnell Earl of Tyrconnell; The O'Brien, Earl of Thomond; The O'Quin, Earl of Dunraven.[2] "He thus showed," as Richey tells us, "a moderation, a conciliatory spirit, a respect for the feelings of the Celtic population, a sympathy with the poor, which no subsequent English ruler has ever displayed."[3] When in the Parliament of 1542, he assumed the title of King of Ireland, the country seemed to have been brought definitely and permanently under his sway, and as a matter of fact the Irish remained at peace until his death.

But after his death there came a change, and a policy of oppression and massacre took the place of his policy of conciliation. In the "Pale" indeed Elizabeth and the Stuarts continued the levelling policy of Henry VIII., employing for the purpose the strong hand of such governors as Sir John Perrot and the celebrated Strafford. But as regards the native Irish, they no longer followed Henry's counsels. They began by forcibly and pitilessly introducing English law, English law-courts and English

[2] Chiefs of Celtic clans bore (and their descendants still bear) the article *The* ("an") before their name (that of their clan): The O'Donnell, The MacDermott. When Shane O'Neill took arms in 1560 against Elizabeth he gave up the title of Earl of Tyrone and again took the name of "The O'Neill."

[3] *Short History of the Irish People*, p. 268.

institutions into the Celtic part of the island. Henry VII. had already made English laws applicable to Ireland by Poynings Act, by which he had rendered the Irish Parliament subordinate to the English crown. The Government now decided to drive out Celtic civilisation by main force and replace it by English. They determined also to conquer Ireland by force of arms, and, with this object in view, decided to take a step, which Henry VIII. had always refused to take even on the advice of Grey and Wolsey, namely, to confiscate the soil of Ireland and "plant" it with Englishmen. The era of confiscations and "plantations" was now to be inaugurated.

Plantations were indeed no novelty. From the very beginning of the English occupation, while the Irish chiefs were being invited to come and do homage and receive back the tribal territories as private property on a feudal tenure, grants of lands were perpetually being made to the invaders. The grants were either of real fiefs, lands which had been confiscated, or of lands which were to be confiscated in the future, fiefs *in partibus*, as it was put. But it was under Queen Mary Tudor that the operation was for the first time undertaken on a grand scale. In 1556 Deputy Bellingham invaded the districts of Leix and Offally, which belonged to the O'Moores and O'Connors, confiscated them and made them into two counties, King's County and Queen's County. They were then "planted" with English settlers. In Elizabeth's reign the Desmond rebels were attainted in the year 1580, and their lands, which comprised almost the whole province of Munster, distributed among a crowd of greedy "undertakers." A similar transaction was carried out on an even more extensive scale under James I., when, after the flight of the Earls,[4] the whole of Ulster was confiscated and planted with from twenty to thirty thousand settlers,

[4] Tyrone and Tyrconnell (1607).

mostly Scotchmen. It was in this way that the Ulster of modern times, Scotch in nationality and Presbyterian in religion, first came into being. Worse was to come. Throughout the reigns of the two first Stuarts the work of confiscation under legal forms was pursued, by means of an odious combination of quibbling, swindling and tyranny. Under James I., Gaelic tenures were abolished throughout the island and replaced by the English land system, and when the *modus operandi* was thus simplified, a swarm of "discoverers" started to dispoil the landowners of Ireland, by breaking the titles under which they held their lands. Nearly half a million acres were seized upon in this fashion. Ravages like those of war, as Edmund Burke put it, took place in a time of perfect peace. On the eve of his downfall, Strafford was making preparations to confiscate Connacht, the only province that had hitherto remained untouched.

What measure of success, it may be asked, did these "plantations," whether effected by methods of violence or under a cloak of legality, attain? Did they achieve their purpose and secure the subjugation of the country, by filling it with English settlers? It may be answered at once that they did not. The newcomers were, for the most part, the dregs of the English population, "a motley crew of adventurers," as Lord Clare expressed it at a later date.[5] Elizabeth and James had imposed conditions upon the settlers, but these were disregarded. Many settlers took the earliest opportunity of selling their allotments to speculators. Others did not even trouble themselves to make the journey to Ireland, and as to diffusing English civilisation, they did so, in the words of Goldwin Smith, "much as an American settler would diffuse it among Red Indians, by improving them, as far as they could, from off the face of the earth."

5 "The vultures settled upon Ireland," as Goldwin Smith puts it (*Irish History and Irish Character*, p. 79). *Cf.* the saying of Stewart, a contemporary, cited in Lecky (II., 109), "Going to Ireland was looked on as a miserable mark of a deplorable person."

Everyone in Ireland was thus affected by the confiscations; the Irish suffered as well as the Anglo-Irish, the Desmonds as well as the O'Neills, those who were Gaels by race equally with those who were so by adoption; and the result that might have been expected ensued. The whole country united in opposition to the oppressions and confiscations of English law, and of the English "planters" whom it had brought into being. Each chief felt himself individually threatened with a bill of attainder or a decree for confiscation and, perhaps, by an English dagger or English poison as well. Whatever might have been the excesses or misdeeds of the chief himself, he had the sympathy of the people, for there was no one else to defend them against the foreign foe. Whenever one of them rose in revolt the whole province rose with him; and each of the chiefs did rise, but unhappily for themselves, never in a simultaneous and concerted movement. There was no combined action. They never reaped the benefit of the alliances they had formed on the continent, and the English were always able to procure allies and promote defection among them.

Three great insurrections took place during the reign of Elizabeth. In 1560 came that of Shane O'Neill, who defeated Sussex, treated with the Queen in London, defied English authority, and met his end in 1567, when he was murdered by the instructions of Lord Deputy Sydney. Desmond rose in 1567 and, in a more serious campaign, in 1579. Munster rose with him, and he pushed his operations as far as the Wicklow mountains. But after a contest, protracted over four years, he was slain by his pursuers in a remote part of Kerry. Finally, in 1596, another O'Neill, Aodh (or Hugh), believing that his downfall was being plotted in Dublin, made common cause with his rival, O'Donnell, and began by defeating the English under Bagenal. He received, however, but poor support from Desmond (the "sugaun earl"). Reinforcements from Spain under Don Juan d'Aguila having come too late, he was after a time compelled to come to terms with

Mountjoy, under which he was conceded all the honours of war.

Elizabeth had thus made an end of insurrections, many as they had been. But the price had been a heavy one. On each occasion the course of events was the same. The rebellion was first provoked by systematic oppression, by treachery,[6] or by acts of violence. Then it was suppressed by wholesale devastation and massacre. The English were too busily occupied with wars, plots and religious strife, to trouble about effecting a complete and final conquest of Ireland; hence cruelty took the place of vigorous action, and extermination was substituted for conquest. The cold-blooded and systematic savagery of Elizabeth's lieutenants, Sussex, Mountjoy, Raleigh, Pelham, Grey, and Carew, has seldom been equalled, and the accounts of their proceedings given by Englishmen, such as Carew, himself, Spenser, Holinshed and Sir John Davies, fill one with horror. "The suppression of the native race, in the wars against Shane O'Neill, Desmond and Tyrone, was carried out with a ferocity which surpassed that of Alva in the Netherlands and has seldom been exceeded in the pages of history." These are the words with which the famous historian, Lecky, opens his account of these horrors.[7]

Lecky then tells us how Sussex first sought to have Shane O'Neill murdered, and afterwards sent him poison; how Essex, having accepted Brian O'Neill's hospitality, had the house surrounded, massacred O'Neill's followers, and then sent him and his wife to Dublin, where they were both put to death; how when it was sought to wring a confession of rebellion from the Catholic Archbishop Hurley, he was tortured by having his feet roasted before he was sent to the gallows. But isolated incidents of this nature serve only to distract our attention from

6 See the many instances in Leland, Moryson, Holinshed and in the State Papers. *Cf.* Daniel O'Connell. *A Memoir of Ireland.* Chap. I.

7 *History of England in the 18th Century*, II., p. 95. (See pp. 95-98 *Cf.* Froude, *History of England*, ed 1875. Chaps. X. and XI.

the broad features of the history of the period, and thus prevent us from realising to the full the atrocious character of these wars. They were, in truth, campaigns of extermination in which the Irish were slaughtered like wild beasts. There was a deliberate and systematic butchery, not only of grown men, but of women and children as well. Parties of soldiers scoured the country, putting to the sword everyone they met, and the English generals made no secret of their massacres of women and unoffending peasants. Irish annalists relate, with shocking details, how the soldiery of Pelham and Ormond used to slay "blind and feeble men, women, boys and girls, rich persons, idiots and old people." They tell us how, in the Desmond country, when all resistance was at an end, the soldiers forced the people into old barns, which they then set on fire, putting to the sword any who sought to escape; how soldiers were seen to catch up children on the points of their swords, making them squirm in the air in their death agony; or yet again, how women were found hanged from trees, with the children at their bosoms strangled in the hair of their mothers. In Ulster, too, Mountjoy "never showed mercy to any but such as had drawn the blood of some of their fellow rebels; thus, MacMahon and MacArtmoyle offered to submit, but neither could be received without the other's head."[8]

No doubt, the cruelties were not all on one side, but is it the part of him who excels in force to excel also in inhumanity? "The sword," continues Lecky, "was not found sufficiently expeditious, but another method proved more efficacious." Year after year over a great

8 Lecky *op. cit.* II., 95-98. In 1579 the garrison of Smerwick, County Kerry, seven hundred in number, having surrendered at discretion Lord Deputy Grey had them put to death in the presence of Sir Walter Raleigh (Leland *op. cit.* Bk. IV., chap. II.). The same Lord Grey, accompanied by Ormond, entered Sleughlogher in open daylight and put four hundred persons to death (Holinshed *op. cit.* VI.). On the massacre of Mullaghmast, accomplished by treachery, and in comparison with which that of Glencoe pales into insignificance, see Leland, *op. cit.* Bk. IV., chap. II. *Cf.* O'Connell. *A Memoir of Ireland, Observations, Proofs and Illustrations,* Chap. I.

part of Ireland all means of human subsistence were destroyed, no quarter was given to prisoners who surrendered, and the whole population was skilfully and steadily starved to death. The troops of Sir Richard Percie "left neither corn nor barn, nor house unburnt between Kinsale and Ross."

The troops of Captain Harvie did the like between Ross and Bantry. The troops of Sir Charles Wilmot entered without resistance an Irish camp, where they found nothing but hurt and sick men, "whose pains and lives by the soldiers were both determined." The Lord President, as he himself assures us, having heard that the Munster fugitives were harboured in certain parts of that province, diverted his forces thither, "burnt all the houses and corn, taking great preys . . . . . and harassing the country killed all mankind that were found therein." Thence he passed to other parts, where "he did the like, not leaving behind him man or beast, corn or cattle, except such as had been conveyed into earth." A high English official, writing in 1582, computed that in six months, more than 30,000 people had been starved to death in Munster, besides those who were hanged or who perished by the sword.[9]

These things happened during the course of a war. But even in a period of complete peace, the "Presidents" of the provinces devastated the country in a manner equally appalling. Malby, President of Connacht, tells us that, having made his way into the territory of the Burkes, he decided to lay waste the countryside with fire and sword, sparing neither young nor old, that he burnt everything and put to the sword everyone he met with, and that having taken a castle by assault he handed over the garrison, who had surrendered, to the mercy of his soldiers, who put them all to death.[10]

9 Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 96-97. The quotations are from Sir George Carew's *Pacata Hibernia.*

10 Froude, *History of England,* XI., p. 197.

Leland relates[11] that Sir Arthur Chichester, the governor of Carrickfergus, laid waste the country for twenty miles around that town. Sir Samuel Bagenal, the governor of Newry, did the same, and the English garrisons were occupied every day in the work of rapine and devastation.

Famine was deemed the quickest and surest means of reducing the rebels, as we are told by Leland in another place. This was the view of that gentle idealist, the author of the "Faerie Queen," Edmund Spenser, who explains with perfect naïvety that the famished Irish "will soon be compelled to devour each other." We may quote Spenser further as to the state of Munster after the Desmond war. The poet had received a considerable allotment of confiscated land from his protector, Grey. "Out of every corner of the woodes and glynnes," he tells us, "they came creeping foorthe upon theyr handes, for theyre legges could not beare them; they looked like anatomyes of deathe, they spake like ghosts crying out of theyre graves; they did eat of the dead carrions, happy were they if they could find them, yea and one another soon after insoemuch as the very carcases they spared not to scrape out of theyr graves. And if they found a plot of water-cresses or sham-rokes, to these they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet not able long to continue therewithall that in short space there were none almost left, and a most populous and plentiful country suddenly made voyde of man or beast."

"From Dingle to the Rock of Cashel," say the Annals of the Four Masters, "not the lowing of a cow nor the voice of the plowman was that year to be heard." The work was carried out in the same way in the North. "In the single county of Tyrone 3,000 persons in a few months were starved. No spectacle was more frequent in the ditches of towns and especially of wasted counties, than to see multitudes of these poor people dead with

[11] Leland, *op. cit.* IV., Chap. V. It must be remembered that Leland writes as an Englishman and a Protestant Minister. *Cf.* Spenser. *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, p. 654 (*Globe Ed.*).

their mouths all coloured green with eating nettles, docks, and all things they could find above the ground." On one occasion, Sir Arthur Chichester, with some English officers, saw three small children—the eldest not above ten years old—feeding off the flesh of their starved mother. In the neighbourhood of Newry famine gave rise to a novel and appalling crime. It was discovered that some old women were accustomed by lighting fires to attract children, whom they then murdered and proceeded to devour.[12] Ireland, brazed, as in a mortar, to use Sir John Davies' phrase, at last submitted. In the last years of the century half the population had perished. Elizabeth reigned over corpses and ashes. *Hibernia Pacata.* Ireland was "pacified."[13]

IV.—The Conquest (1603-1691).[1]

"Peace reigned in Ireland," but the conquest had not yet been achieved, and the work of subjugation was destined to be carried out by massacres, confiscations and "plantations," in the seventeenth century precisely as in the sixteenth. Things followed much the same course in the reigns of the Stuarts and under Cromwell as in the days of the Tudors, and the conquest of Ireland was not finally achieved until the time of William III. But in the seventeenth century the work of subjugation assumed at once more of a religious and more of a political complexion. Ireland had remained Catholic when England had embraced Protestantism; and as an inevitable result religious persecution was added to race

12 Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 98.

13 Lord Grey, one of Elizabeth's Lieutenants (Leland, *op. cit.* IV., Chap. II.).

1 See especially on this epoch, Ball, *The Reformed Church in Ireland*, London, 1886. *State Papers* (reign of James I.). Carte, *History of the Life of the Duke of Ormond*, 1735-1736. Sir William Petty, *Political Anatomy of Ireland*, 1691. Prendergast, *The Cromwellian Settlement in Ireland*, 2nd edition, Dublin, 1875. J. F. Taylor, *Owen Roe O'Neill*, 3rd edition, London and Dublin, 1904. Thomas Davis, *The Patriot Parliament* (3rd edition in the New Irish Library, London).

domination. Again, Ireland being so closely connected with England, could not but be affected by the two revolutions for which the Stuarts were responsible, and to which they fell victims. The Irish took the losing side. England wreaked vengeance on them for their loyalty, real or apparent, to a reigning house that cared no more for the Irish than the Irish cared for them, that in truth regarded Ireland as but a pawn in their political game.

Again, when the English turned Protestant, they naturally desired that the Irish should do the same.[2] But the Tudors, who persecuted Catholicism so sharply in England, had been tolerant, by comparison, in Ireland. The Church of England was not long in establishing a foothold in the east of Ireland, as a result of the confiscation of churches, monasteries and religious houses.[3] But at first no attempt was made to extend its influence beyond the " Pale," and hence, outside the Pale, Irish and Anglo-Irish alike remained Catholic.

Elizabeth was the first to persecute " Papist recusants," that is, those who refused to take the oath of supremacy. She imprisoned or put to death bishops, monks, and Jesuits.[4] Moreover, as the " plantations " progressed, the Anglican church grew in power. Having been triumphantly endowed with the spoils of Catholicism by Henry VIII., it embarked upon a course of persecution. From this forward the animosity between the Catholics and the new Protestant " planters " grew every day more bitter. The Puritans assumed a threatening attitude. Papists were

2 G. de Beaumont *op. cit.* I, 32.

3 Anglicanism was first introduced into Ireland by the Act of Supremacy of 1537, which imposed an oath which anyone refusing to take was guilty of High Treason. This was followed by an Act for the Supression of Abbeys, which was extended to all religious houses in 1542. Convents and abbeys were declared to be the property of the Crown. These Acts were subsequently repealed by Queen Mary Tudor, in 1553, but the confiscated property which had changed hands was not restored to its owners. Finally, Anglicanism was definitely established in Ireland by Elizabeth, by the Act of Supremacy and Uniformity of 1562.

4 Lecky, the great historian (*op. cit.* II., 99-103), lays stress on the point that the wars of Elizabeth in Ireland were entirely political and agrarian, and not religious wars. This is most questionable. Nay,

excluded from all places of emolument, and were thrown into gaol, or had their goods confiscated, because they refused to take the oath. When we add to the rancour produced by this persecution that which resulted from wholesale confiscations, from the " planting " of Ulster in James I.'s reign, from Strafford's projected confiscation of Connacht, from deeds of spoliation carried on under legal forms, from the menace that hung over every head throughout the length and breadth of the country, there is small difficulty in understanding how it came about that all the Catholics of Ireland—save a few Government hacks, like the Ormonds—profited by the weakness of the Crown in these troubled times, and rose *en masse*, not for the king, but against the king, against the English Government, against the planter and the persecutor, in the Great Rebellion of 1641.

The facts can be found in all contemporary accounts of the insurrection. The men of Ulster were the first to rise and drive out the new " planters " not a few of whom perished in the conflict.[5] The insurrection then spread through the country, having now assumed a purely religious aspect. The reprisals of the Protestants and the proscriptions decreed by the English Parliament added to its vigour. Victory crowned the campaign under the leadership of Owen Roe O'Neill. The insurgents gained supreme power throughout Catholic Ireland and proceeded to establish their Parliament—the Confederation of Kilkenny. They entered into negotiations with Charles I. and were duped by him. Their excesses, terrible as they

rather it is certain that from the middle of the sixteenth century on, the religious question had become acute in Ireland, and anti-Catholic persecutions had a great deal to do with the risings of that epoch.

5 See Lecky's refutation of the exaggerations, by which certain anti-Irish historians have endeavoured to paint the Ulster Rebellion of 1641 as a general massacre of Protestants, a parallel to the Sicilian Vespers, some of them putting the number of slain at 50,000, and others at 100,000, or even 200,000 or 310,000. The number of Protestants slain was from four to eight thousand. Lecky points out the interest which the English in Ireland had in exaggerating the accounts of the massacre. They hoped in this way to strengthen their shaky titles to their property and to pave the way for the Penal Laws. (*Cf. cit.* II. 128, 153).

were, were far less terrible than those perpetrated by Sir Charles Coote, St. Leger, and Sir Frederick Hamilton, who, on the opposite side, proved themselves worthy successors of Mountjoy and Carew.

From the first the Lords Justices ordered the troops to refuse all quarter. In Leinster, they were instructed to slay and destroy the rebels, their adherents and their accomplices, to burn and raze to the ground all towns, places and houses, where they received shelter, to put to the sword all the inhabitants capable of bearing arms. They had orders to put to death any priest that fell into the hands of the troops. It is not difficult to imagine the fashion in which such orders were carried out. The details of the massacres that ensued are best omitted.[6] It is pleasanter to recall, as Lecky does,[7] how Owen Roe O'Neill made it his practice to repress excesses on the part of his troops and invariably gave quarter to prisoners; how the Synod of Kilkenny in 1642 decreed excommunication against Catholics guilty of pillage, arson or murder; how the rebels did honour to the Protestant Bishop Bedell, protected his ministrations, and gave him, on his death, a magnificent funeral with military honours. It was at his funeral that the crowd made use of the famous cry, "*Requiescat in pace, Ultimus Anglorum*!"

But, in England, the revolution had been successful. It was no longer with the King, but with the "Roundheads," with Cromwell and his Iron-sides, that the Irish

[6] See Lecky, *op. cit.* 156 *et seq.* Carte's soldiers perpetrated wholesale massacres and spared neither women nor children. Saint-Leger ravaged Munster with fire and sword. One day he had a woman, big with child, cut open, and her three children, taken from her arms, impaled upon spear points. Near Newry, Monroe and his troops killed in one day seven hundred peasants, men, women and children, who were driving their flocks. In Westmeath and Longford his soldiers set the country ablaze and slew everybody. In Island Magee thirty families were massacred in their beds by the Carrickfergus garrison. Sir William Coote tells us himself of the exploits of his regiment in Ulster—"Starved and famished of the vulgar sort whose goods were seized on by this regiment, 7,000." It was at this time that the phrase "Nits will be lice," was coined to justify the slaughter of children. *Cf.* O'Connell, *A Memoir of Ireland* (Observations, Proofs, etc. Chap. III.).

[7] *Op. cit.* II., 161-167.

had now to deal. Ormond and the Royalist forces now sided with the insurgents against whom they had but lately been engaged, but both parties were destined to succumb before the arms of the Puritans. Cromwell landed in Ireland in 1649 and proceeded "in the name of Jesus" to massacre the garrison of Drogheda, thirty thousand in number, Englishmen for the most part, though Catholics. A similar fate overtook the garrison of Wexford. Before long, Ireland lay prostrate at the Protector's feet. He decided to deal with the country on a very simple plan, namely, to exterminate the Irish inhabitants and make it a land inhabited only by Englishmen. In the eleven years of the war 616,000 persons had already perished out of a total population of 1,466,000.[8] The policy of extermination had done its work. Priests were hanged, banished, or imprisoned in Arran. A campaign of persecution was maintained against the Catholics. Between thirty and forty thousand Irishmen fled to France and Spain to join those who had formerly become exiles during the wars and confiscations of Elizabeth's reign. Thousands of young girls, women and children, were sold as slaves and sent to Jamaica and the Barbadoes, as were also all rebels taken with arms in their hands.[9] In this way Ireland was turned into a desert and cleared of its inhabitants. The wolves came to ravage at the very gates of Dublin. Cromwell now desired to colonise the country with English. The lands of three provinces, Ulster, Leinster and Munster, were confiscated and divided between the Puritan soldiers and the "undertakers" who had advanced to the Parliament the funds required for the expedition. The remaining province, Connacht, was given over to the remnants of the old population, who were, so to speak, penned into it. Death was to be the portion of every

8 These are Sir William Petty's figures (Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 172).

9 Sir William Petty puts the figures at 6,000. Others have put it as high as 100,000, but this latter figure is an obvious exaggeration. *Cf.* O'Connell, *A Memoir of Ireland.* Chap. III.

Irishman found east of the Shannon. "To Hell or Connacht!" was the law and the policy of Cromwell.

Never has a more savage design been put into execution, at any rate in modern times, than this project of destroying a whole nation and planting another in its place. Yet, even Cromwell did not dare to complete the work, and for this he has been censured by Froude and other writers. The Irish race was not entirely extinguished, and Irishmen continued to exist not merely in Connacht but throughout the whole island. The need for manual labour caused the new colonists to preserve the former inhabitants "as hewers of wood and drawers of water," if nothing better. Ireland was so far from becoming English that less than half a century later she was again strong enough to join battle with the English; once again, strange though it seem, in the cause of the Stuarts. Yet it was Cromwell who brought modern Ireland into being and fashioned it into what it is; and it is he who is ultimately responsible for all its troubles. Any inquiry into the Irish question must begin by a consideration of his measures, for even the Jacobite reaction interfered little with his handiwork. When Charles II. was restored in England he granted a general confirmation of the "settlement," although in truth Cromwell's "planters" had turned out no better than those of Elizabeth and James I. Charles also maintained the laws by which the Catholic religion was proscribed, and it was in his reign that Archbishop Talbot of Malahide was imprisoned in Dublin Castle, where he died, and that the Venerable Oliver Plunket, Archbishop of Armagh, was dragged before a mock tribunal in London by which he was condemned to death, and suffered martyrdom. But when the second revolution broke out in England, James II., being in sore need of the assistance of the Irish, set himself to flatter the hopes of Catholics, and made promises of restoration to those whose lands had been confiscated. Hence, when he was driven out of England all the "papists" in Ireland rose in his favour, or rather rose against the English. An Irish Catholic

Parliament was assembled, which proclaimed religious liberty for all men in 1689, and set itself to restore Irish rights by measures of violence, which, however, were not in all cases without justification.[10] What followed is matter of history; William's landing in Ireland; James's flight to the Boyne; the brave stand of the Protestants at Derry; the splendid defence of Limerick by the Catholics. A treaty of peace was signed at Limerick in 1691, but the war had the same fatal issue as all other Irish insurrections; a million acres were confiscated by William, and planted anew with Englishmen and Protestants. This was the last of the long series of English "Plantations" in Ireland.

What then was the final outcome of all these insurrections, of that cruel era of conquest which began with the first of the Tudors and ended only with the reign of the last Stuart, a period in which plantations, wars and massacres, followed one the other with a dire monotony unparalleled in modern history? There resulted from them not a single and united Irish nation, but rather two hostile Irelands, the one superimposed on the other, such as we find to-day. But the line of demarcation between the two nations was no longer one of race; the division was a political, a religious, and a social one. On the one side were the Protestants, of Scotch or English descent, the last *conquistadores* of Ireland, the men who had benefited by the last plantations, or those who had succeeded to their rights. All the land, all the wealth, and all the political power in the country were in their hands. Their Church was the State Church. They constituted the English "colony," the Ascendancy, the Anglo-Saxon Hegemony or Aristocracy of Ireland. On the other side was the mingled mass of the whole former Catholic population of Ireland—Irish, Anglo-Irish, English—now brought together and made one by misery

[10] Macaulay's judgment upon the Parliament of 1689 is not impartial. See Lecky's more moderate view (*op. cit.* II., 183-196). The Act of Attainder against the Orangemen bears a curious resemblance to the Decrees of the Convention against *Émigrés*.

and persecution. Most of them had been reduced to the condition of helots. Some even worked as tenant-farmers the land once owned by their ancestors.[11] The "common enemy" was the designation usually applied to them. Two centuries of massacre and persecution had planted ineradicably in their hearts an undying hatred of England.[12]

V.—The Eighteenth Century: The Penal Laws.[1]

Out of these two Irelands, England, in the course of the eighteenth century, could have, and ought to have, made one united Ireland. The country was exhausted, the English conquest firmly established. The Jacobite movements of the eighteenth century did not affect Ireland. Lord Chesterfield might well say that the only "papist danger" he knew of was the beauty of Miss Ambrose, a reigning belle of the time in Dublin.

"The nation," says Lecky,[2] "was as passive as clay in the hands of the potter" . . . "No country," he tells us later, "ever exercised a more complete control over the destinies of another than did England over those of Ireland for three-quarters of a century after the Revolution."

[11] Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 205.

[12] *Ib.*, II., 199. The total population of Ireland was very much reduced after Cromwellian times. Sir William Petty estimated it in 1672 at but 1,100,000 souls. Afterwards it rapidly increased. Petty, in the 17th century, estimated the proportion of Protestants to Catholics at 3 : 8; Coghill, in 1733, at 1 : 3; Primate Boulter, about the same time, at 1 : 5. (*Cf.* Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 255).

[1] See especially for this period the works of Swift, Berkeley, Burke, Arthur Young, and lives and speeches of Grattan and Flood, the letters of Primate Boulter and Archbishop Synge. Sir J. Barrington's *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*, 1833. Sir G. Lewis, *Irish Disturbances*, London, 1836. *Two Centuries of Irish History*, edited by James Bryce, 1888. Froude, *The English in Ireland in the 18th Century*, London, 1872, and *The Two Chiefs of Dunboy*. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*. 2nd edition, 1871, and 3rd edition, 1903 (it is interesting to compare the two editions, which exhibit striking differences). G. De Beaumont in the first volume of *Ireland: Social, Political, and Religious* (p. 75 to 131) gives a very clear exposition of the Penal Laws and their consequences. *Cf.* in regard to the Penal Laws the laments of the Irish poet, O'Rahilly, whose works have been lately edited by Fr. Dineen (3rd vol. of the Irish Texts Society, London, 1900).

[2] *Op. cit.* II., 256—As to Chesterfield's *mot*, see *ib.*, 278.

Thus the union of the two peoples, the two nations, that then existed in Ireland, would not have been difficult to accomplish ; and if left to themselves, the Irish would, no doubt, soon have assimilated the new rulers, as they had assimilated the old. Even the " planters " of Elizabeth's time had already become Irish in large part. Many of them had assisted in stirring up the insurrection of 1641. The grandson of Spenser, the poet, had himself been driven out of his land by Cromwell's army, as an Irish papist. We have it on the word of a contemporary that forty years after Cromwell's time, many of the children of the Protector's soldiers could not speak a word of English ; and seven years after the battle of the Boyne, many of William III.'s soldiers had already become Catholics. " The conquest of Ireland by the Puritan soldiers of Cromwell," observes Lecky, " was hardly more signal than the conquest of these soldiers by the invincible Catholicism of the Irish women."[3] To fashion these two Irelands into one and then to civilise and develop this new Ireland, such was the task that lay before the English government. But this task it consistently refused to perform, and preferred instead to widen the chasm between the two nationalities, using the one to keep down the other, whilst in reality it oppressed and exploited both, till at last, at the close of the century, the two united in a common insurrection against English rule.

Ireland's great misfortune at this period was that it had two masters, first England, and secondly, the English " garrison " in Ireland, the English Government on the one hand, and the Protestants of Ireland on the other. From a political point of view, the regime thus imposed upon the country was the worst that could possibly be imagined ; namely, a combination of the government peculiar to a colony, or dependency, with that of a ruling caste, which, though all-powerful in Ireland, was yet not

3 *Op. cit.* II., 371. *Cf. Modern Ireland*, by Dr. George Sigerson, London, 372, 1868, p. 382 to 383.

itself independent.[4] Had England governed Ireland directly mere self-interest must have made it protect the weak against the strong. Had it, on the other hand, handed over all power to the ruling caste, self-interest would have induced that caste to promote efficient government. But, as it was, Ireland was controlled by the "garrison," and the "garrison" was ruled by England, with the result that all sense of responsibility, all zeal for the common interest, entirely disappeared.

"Protestant Ireland," as Grattan put it, "knelt to England on the necks of her countrymen." In one aspect they were tyrants, in another they were slaves. They were at once oppressors and oppressed. There was a sort of "deal" between them and the English Government, by which the public welfare was to be sacrificed to the English Government, the Irish Catholics to the "garrison."[5] We must then consider this two-fold oppression, that of Ireland as a whole by England on the one hand, and that of the Irish Catholics by the "garrison" of English Protestants on the other.

For Irish Catholics, the eighteenth century was the epoch of persecution under forms of law. "Popery" had lived through the bloody persecutions of former times; it was now thought to be a simpler and a surer method to put it down by a system of penal enactments. Liberty of conscience had indeed been guaranteed to Catholics by the Treaty of Limerick. But the obstacle did not prove a serious one. The treaty was torn up, and from 1695 to 1709 the Protestant Parliament of Ireland passed a series of penal laws, which, in the words of Edmund Burke, "were not the effect of their fears but of their security."[6] The purpose of this legislation was to crush Catholicism and Irish Catholics by legal means in such a way that there might never afterwards be anything to fear from them.

4 *Two Centuries of Irish History*, p. xxi.
5 G. De Beaumont, *op. cit.* I., 81, *et seq.*
6 Letters to Sir Hercules Langrishe.

WITHDRAWN

Never was there a system so cunningly devised or worked out in such detail as this famous "Penal Code." For two centuries it served to supply fanatical persecutors in every land with instruments of torture ready to hand. "It would not be difficult," said Goldwin Smith,[7] "to point to persecuting laws more sanguinary than these . . . . . But it would be difficult to point to any more insulting to the best feelings of man or more degrading to religion." Nothing was left undone. Everything was foreseen with cold-blooded and calculating ingenuity. Violence was united to hypocrisy, perfidy to corruption, and the highest honours and rewards were reserved for the apostate and the informer. It is "vicious perfection."[8]

Catholic worship was tolerated, but only on sufferance. All public ceremonies and all pilgrimages were prohibited; even bells and crosses were interdicted. The ordination of any new clergymen was forbidden by law; decree of banishment was passed against all bishops and members of religious orders, and death was to be their punishment in case they returned to Ireland. Secular priests could not exercise their office under pain of deportation, until they had registered themselves and taken, not merely an oath of allegiance, but an oath of abjuration, which their Church forbade them to take. Every Papist was ordered, under pain of fine, to inform against his clergyman. On the other hand, a public pension was assigned by the State to every priest who should turn Protestant.[9] That is how the clergy were dealt with. As for the Catholic laity, they were deprived of all political rights whatever. "The law does not suppose any such person to exist as an Irish Roman Catholic," said a Lord Chancellor upon one occasion. They were forbidden to act as teachers

7 *Irish History and Irish Character*, p. 127.

8 Works II., 11; III., 313; VI., 18.

9 See Lecky (*op. cit.*, I., 296 and 297) as to the proposed law for inflicting the punishment of castration upon unregistered priests. A Bill to this effect was drawn up by the Irish Privy Council, but the English Government refused to sanction it.

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under pain of banishment, and under pain of death in case they returned from banishment. They were forbidden to have their children educated, except by Protestants, or to have them educated abroad. They were debarred from obtaining any public employment or practising any liberal profession except that of medicine. They could not hold property in land, or take land on lease for a longer term than thirty years, and then only on the harshest conditions. If they engaged in trade or industry, they had to pay a special tax and could not employ more than two apprentices. They were forbidden to carry arms or to own a horse of greater value than £5. They could not act as guardians of their own children, nor marry a Protestant wife, nor inherit an estate from a Protestant relative. Moreover, the property of a Catholic was equally divided between his children on his death, the law of primogeniture being confined to Protestants. The object of this last provision was, of course, to secure that if a Catholic chanced to make a fortune it should soon be dissipated.

The trade of the informer was encouraged by ample rewards ; £20 for an unregistered priest, £50 for a bishop. " Priest-hunting " was quite a lucrative profession. But if a Catholic became a Protestant all was changed. Instead of a slave he had become a master, and the law heaped favours upon him. The Lord Chancellor saw to it that he had a preferential claim to succeed to the estate of his parents, and if he were the eldest of several children he at once acquired the sole legal ownership of all the family property, his parents retaining merely a life-estate. Moreover, with a view to making converts to Protestantism, whilst Catholics were forbidden to engage in educational pursuits, the country was studded over with Protestant schools, where the children of Papists could receive free tuition.

" There was thus established," in the oft-quoted words of Burke,[10] " a complete system full of coherence and

[10] Letters to Sir H. Langrishe, Works III., 343.

consistency, well digested and composed in all its parts . . . . . a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance; and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." It was not merely the persecution of a religion, it was an attempt to degrade and demoralise a whole nation.[11] It was sought at any cost to keep Papists in misery, ignorance and slavery, and this with no other purpose save to assure the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. The "planters" who had come to Ireland in the time of Cromwell or William III. knew how precarious was their title to the land, and they thus sought to adopt means that could not fail to assure their position.

"Pure religious fanaticism," writes Lecky,[12] "does not indeed appear ever to have played a dominant part in this legislation. The object of the Penal Laws, even in the worst period, was much less to produce a change of religion than to secure property and power by reducing to complete impotence those who had formerly possessed them." Fanaticism, as Perraud[13] remarks, served merely as cloak to cupidity, a circumstance which hardly tended to make it less hateful.

Such were the famous Penal Laws, destined to exercise so disastrous and so lasting an influence upon the future of Ireland. Dr. Johnson, a strong Tory, said of them—[14] "There is no instance even in the ten persecutions of such severity as that which the Protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics." These laws remained in full force for half a century; but in the latter half of the eighteenth century their severity was relaxed. They had already produced the result that was aimed at. Nothing more could be expected from them. Not that they had

[11] Lecky *op. cit.* I., 283.
[12] *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland.* 3rd edition, I., 19.
[13] *Op. cit.* II., 463. *Cf.* Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 286. De Beaumont, *op cit,* I., 120. Arthur Young, *Tour in Ireland,* II., 141.
[14] Lecky, *op. cit.* I., 302.

succeeded in destroying Catholicism. Priests living in concealment, and perpetually at the mercy of informers, had continued to celebrate the rites of the proscribed religion in undiscovered "mass-houses." Nor had Catholic education been stamped out. Small groups of Catholic children continued to receive instruction contrary to law in "hedge-schools," and always at the risk of prosecution. "The passion for knowledge," says Lecky,[15] "among the Irish poor was extremely strong, and the zeal with which they maintained their hedge schools under the pressure of abject poverty, and in the face of the prohibitions of the penal code, is one of the most honourable features in their history." It is true indeed that, as apostacy was a condition precedent to all worldly success, a certain number of Papists joined the Anglican Church. Yet even in this direction the success attained was trifling. It is estimated that from 1703 to 1738 only 1,000 Catholics embraced the Protestant religion. The Anglican Primate Archbishop Boulter tells us that in the time of direst persecution an appreciably greater number of Protestants turned Catholic, than Catholics Protestant.[16]

What then, it may be asked, was the result of the Penal Laws? The answer is to be found in the stream of exiles whom they hunted from Ireland, and in the condition to which they reduced those of their victims who remained in Ireland.

Emigration robbed the country of the best elements of her population, and, as in Cromwell's time, soldiers, gentry, and men of the middle classes alike fled from persecution. Each year saw a flight of the "wild geese," as they were called, who followed the example of the garrison of Limerick, which to the number of 14,000 men had enlisted in the French army immediately after the signing of the Treaty. The armies of all the Catholic powers soon contained large contingents of Irishmen. Irishmen became

[15] *Op. cit.* II., 202.

[16] Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 289 to 290—as to Primate Boulter's remark see Matthew Arnold, *Irish Essays*, p. 70.

Grandees of Spain and Magnates of the Holy Roman Empire. Nugent, Brown, and Lacy attained distinction in the service of Maria-Theresa. The O'Neills and O'Donnells found asylum in Spain. A Wall became Prime Minister, an O'Mahony an Ambassador of that country. But France, beyond all other countries, was a second fatherland to the Irish exiles, and men like Tyrconnell, Dillon, and Lally, became famous in her service. A historian (though his statement is plainly exaggerated) has reckoned at 450,000 the number of Irish who perished in French armies from 1691 to 1745.[17] Who has not heard of the glory of the "Irish Brigade," which for a whole century carried on to every French battlefield its banner with the brave motto, "Semper et Ubique Fideles," struck the decisive blow, under Clare, at Fontenoy, and on the evening of Dettingen wrung from King George II. the celebrated imprecation, "God curse the laws that made these men my enemies"?[18]

But in their own country these same laws transformed the Catholics into a race of slaves. Weakened by massacres and emigration, the nation stooped unresistingly beneath the burden of oppression. The mass of the population was reduced to the condition of serfs, of pariahs, and Ireland, deprived of its natural leaders by the disappearance of almost all the old families, ceased to be a nation, and became instead an inert mass of exhausted and hopeless humanity. There was an advance, it may be, in private morality and individual piety, but will and character grew weak in the course of the unending struggle. Now that they had sunk to the condition of

17 MacGeoghegan, *Histoire d'Irlande*, Paris, 1758 to 1763, III., 754. *Cf.* Lecky *op. cit.* II., 262. *Cf.* O'Callaghan, *History of the Irish Brigade*, 1851.

18 It shows the dreadful results of persecution that whilst Irish soldiers and generals were seeking refuge in France, French Protestants came to seek a home in Ireland. William III. had a regiment of French Protestants at the Boyne to whom he said "Messieurs, vos persecuteurs sont devant vous." It was a French Protestant named Crommelin who imported the industry of weaving into Ireland. French names, such as Le Fanu, La Touche, Saurin, Lefroy, are still common in Ireland.

slaves the vices of slavery took possession of the Irish, idleness and servility, falsehood and contempt for law. Despised by the Protestants, they learnt to despise themselves, and the feeling of social inferiority burnt into their souls. They bent under the yoke of the landlords, who, in their threefold capacity of landlords, Protestants, and magistrates, treated the Irish, as Lord Chesterfield put it, "worse than negroes."[19] In such conditions poverty rapidly increased, till it became appalling. "We found the people heretics and idolators," said Burke.[20] "We have, by way of improving their condition, rendered them slaves and beggars; they remain in all the misfortune of their old errors, and all the superadded misery of their recent punishment."

In 1727 Swift declares that the peasants of Ireland "live worse than English beggars."[21] Two years later he published his famous *Modest Proposal.* In the course of twenty years there were no less than three or four great famines. 400,000 persons perished in that of the year 1740-41, according to a contemporary. In 1741 one-third of the cottiers in Munster died of famine or fever.[22] At length the poverty of the people and the oppression from which they suffered gave birth to outrages and popular risings directed against "rent" and "tithes," against the exactions of the landlords and of the Protestant clergy. From 1760 onwards the Whiteboys or as they were called in some places, Levellers, Houghers, Oakboys or Steelboys, spread terror through the country. This was the first purely agrarian movement in Ireland. Papists were hanged and transported wholesale. Repressive laws of terrible severity were enacted and applied with severity yet more terrible by the Irish

[19] Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 291.

[20] Quoted by Matthew Arnold, *Irish Essays*, p. 15. The population increased, it is true, for the poverty was too great to act as any restraint. *Cf.* Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 222.

[21] *A Short View of the State of Ireland.*

[22] Lecky, *op. cit.* II.; 217 to 220.

judges. But, in the long run, judges and hangmen proved powerless to cope with this *jacquerie*.

There seems to be a retributive principle in nature which brings it to pass that the persecutor is commonly more degraded than his victim. A Protestant writer[23] tells us that the net effect of the Penal Laws upon Protestant Ireland was to taint the whole body politic with profound and widespread corruption. The morals of that privileged class, the "garrison," were, in truth, not long in becoming corrupted. Luxury brought with it a certain development of the arts, but a much greater development of gaming, licentiousness, and extravagance. The Squires and Squireens were needy, harsh, quarrelsome and dissipated, and they were often "absentees,"[24] who handed over their rights to middlemen of low character. Lord Chesterfield declared towards the middle of the century that if as many landlords had been killed by the troops as Whiteboys, it would have been better for the public peace.[25] Froude's description of the abandoned lives of the smaller gentry of the period[26] is well worth reading: "The Irish blackguard, the racing, drinking, duelling, swearing squireen, the tyrant of the poor, the shame and scandal of the order to which he affected to belong." Justice itself was corrupted at the fountain-head, for there was no *habeas corpus* in Ireland, and the judges and lawyers were mere Castle-hacks. "The poor," as Grattan said, "were struck out of the protection of the law, the rich out of its penalties." The Established Church, an authority rather temporal than spiritual, shared in all the abuses of the period. It was, in Macaulay's phrase, "a church that filled the rich with good things and sent the hungry empty away."

23 O'Connor Morris, *Ireland*, 1494-1868. Cambridge, 1898, p. 410.

24 Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 239.

25 Stanhope, *History of England*, V., 123.

26 *The English in Ireland*, I., 279, *et seq.* Arthur Young spoke of them as "the vermin of the country." See his account of their lives in his *Tour in Ireland* (II., 50 *et seq.*). See also the famous pamphlets of Swift.

"A true Irish Bishop," declared Archbishop Bolton, "has nothing more to do than to eat, drink, grow rich, fat, and die."[27] Moreover, the Protestants were divided against themselves. The Presbyterians of the North had greatly increased in numbers, as the result of a large Scotch immigration into Ulster after the Revolution. But the Episcopalians secured their exclusion from public office and emoluments. They were compelled to pay tithes to the Established Church, and Presbyterian marriages were declared null and void.

A society which had fallen into such a state of demoralisation was not fit to enjoy the benefits of liberty, and we need not be surprised to find that the tyranny exercised over Catholics by Irish Protestants had a counterpart in the tyranny exercised over Irish Protestants in the eighteenth century by the Protestants of England. This tyranny was twofold, being in part legislative, and in part economic. The Irish Parliament—Catholics were not eligible to sit as members of it or even to vote at parliamentary elections—was made subordinate to the English Parliament and deprived of all real authority and initiative. It was a mere shadow, a caricature of a parliament, which Swift never wearied of ridiculing.[28] Political subjection, as might be expected, resulted in commercial and industrial subjection. This had its origin in Henry VIII.'s time, but more especially in Cromwell's. It was the theory in those days that a colony or dependency existed only for the profit and advantage of the mother-country, and by a system of carefully marshalled laws, passed between 1663 and 1669, England succeeded in completely ruining Irish industry and Irish trade. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the work had been accomplished and Swift, when he heard the customary toast of "Irish Manufactures," proposed, was wont to declare: "I drink no memories!"[29] It was, of course,

[27] O'Connor Morris, *op. cit.* II., 215. (*Cf.* Lecky, *op. cit.* 226 to 236)
[28] See, for instance, Swift's *The Legion Club.*
[29] Brodrick, *Political Studies*, London, 1879, p. 343.

the Protestants who suffered most by this economic ruin, since Catholics were excluded from trade and industry by the Penal Laws. The effects were soon felt, and, during the first half of the eighteenth century, there was a wholesale emigration of Presbyterians from Ulster. Most of them settled in America, where they became the bitterest enemies of England. 200,000 Presbyterians left the country in this way in the course of fifty years.[30]

The Protestants of Ireland endured this two-fold slavery with "abject servility," as an Irish writer puts it.[31] But it is only fair to say that there were among them a few men of sufficiently independent spirit to protest against British tyranny and assert the rights of Ireland against the oppressor. As early as the year 1698 an Irish gentleman, named William Molyneux, a friend of Locke, had written a book, proving the Independence of the Irish Parliament upon historical grounds.[32] This work the Parliament of England at once directed to be burned by the common hangman. Some time later Jonathan Swift published his Pamphlet on Manufactures (1720), his Views on Ireland and his famous *Drapier's Letters* (1723), in which he denounced the oppression and abuses of the English Government, and proclaimed the wrongs of the colonists, setting out those of the Catholics to complete the picture.[33] At once the Dean became the most popular man in Dublin, though he had never concealed his contempt for Papists and his dislike for Ireland, which he looked upon as a place of exile. When he was threatened with arrest the populace of the "Liberties" rose in a body to protect him, as it rose a century later to protect O'Connell. Soon afterwards Bishop Berkeley, the philosopher, aroused a new public spirit with his *Querist*, and awakened interest in the condition of the Catholics. At last, in the latter half of

30 Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 260 to 262.

31 Sir C. Gavan Duffy, *Bird's-eye View of Irish History.*

32 *The Case of Ireland Stated*, 1698.

33 J. Flack, *Swift, son action politique en Irlande*, Paris, 1886.

the century, the Penal Laws were relaxed, and there sprang up in the colony an Irish party or "interest," opposed to the English party or "interest." Though it failed to reform those abuses, which were a source of profit to its members,[34] it made it its business to govern Ireland for the benefit of the Irish instead of conducting the government in the interests of England. From this party came the Protestant Liberals or Irish "Whigs," first Flood and Lucas, then Burke, and above all Grattan. These men realised that Ireland was their country and began to lay aside hatred of the Papists, realising that oppression by England was a heavy price to pay for the pleasure of persecuting Catholics. "The Irish Protestant never could be free," declared Grattan, "while the Irish Catholic was a slave." The idea of Irish nationality and Irish independence became popular, alike with Protestant and with Catholic, and both parties were soon to unite in the effort to secure its realisation.[35]

VI.—The Irish Revolution and the Union (1782-1800).[1]

Independence! It was the success of the American revolution that brought about the Independence of Ireland, and it was the reaction from the French revolution, or rather from its excesses, that was destined to destroy that independence. The events that illuminate the pages of Irish History during the last quarter of the eighteenth century are well known. When in 1776 war broke out between England and her American colonies, Ireland, being without means of defence, raised a militia of 40,000

34 They were called "Undertakers" (*i.e.*, of the public service).

35 The question was, said Grattan, whether they were to be an English colony or an Irish nation.

1 See especially on this period the lives and speeches of Flood, Burke, Grattan, Curran and Plunket; the Life and Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone; the Cornwallis, Fitzwilliam and Castlereagh Correspondence, etc. *Cf.* Madden, *Literary Remains of the United Irishmen*, London, 1887-8. Gordon, *History of the Rebellion of* 1798,

volunteers for its protection. Soon the Irish came to know their own power and saw that they were in a position to force England to yield to their wishes. The famous phrase "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity" received its first application. The Irish secured the abolition of all commercial restraints in 1779, and in 1782 compelled recognition of the independence of the Irish Parliament. No bond save that of the Crown any longer united them to England; they had become a sovereign and independent people. At the same time, as a complement to the liberty which had been regained, many of the Penal Laws against Catholics were repealed. In 1778 Catholics once again acquired the right to own land, and to inherit according to the common law. The sumptuary laws, and the laws directed against the clergy and against Catholic education, were repealed in 1782. In 1792 Catholics were admitted to the Bar and made eligible to serve on juries, and in 1793 they,were granted the Parliamentary franchise. Thus the beginning of Catholic Emancipation went hand in hand with the political emancipation of the nation.

A new era seemed to have begun for Ireland. Once the English yoke was removed, economic prosperity returned as though by magic. The development of the country made immense strides, and the progress of Ireland in the last years of the eighteenth century was extraordinary. There remained one dark spot in the picture, the servile corruption of the Irish Parliament. It was elected by rotten boroughs and composed exclusively of Protestants. Its one desire was to maintain the privileges of the oligarchy that it represented. It proved a ready instrument in the hand of the Government and their

1801-1803. Thomas Moore, *Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, 1831. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland.* Maxwell, *History of the Irish Rebellion of* 1798, London, 1845. Sir Jonah Barrington, *Historic Memoirs of Ireland*, London, 1832. *Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*, Paris, 1833. J. K. Ingram, *The Memory of the Dead* (a fine poem on 1798). Ingram, *History of the Irish Union*, London, 1887, Swift MacNeill, *The Irish Parliament.* London, 1885, ; and *How the Union was Carried*, London, 1887.

ambitious lieutenant, John Fitzgibbon, Lord Clare, who, when the Volunteers—Protestants for the most part—demanded electoral reform, rejected the demand with contempt. Its venal tyranny had the effect of uniting every Irish patriot against it.

With the coming of the French Revolution, a spirit of patriotism, liberty and democracy spread throughout Ireland. The Volunteers became, under Wolfe Tone, the "United Irishmen." Presbyterian and Catholic joined hands, and they had every Liberal and every patriot on their side. They proclaimed "the rights of man," and demanded parliamentary reform and the abolition of abuses. They denounced the intrigues, the jobbery and corruption of the Government. In the country they revolted against the tyranny of the landlords and of the Anglican clergy. In Belfast, the more advanced spirits desired complete separation from England, and dreamed of founding an Irish Republic. As the French Revolution advanced in the direction of Jacobinism, the sentiments of the United Irishmen moved in the same direction. But herein lay the Government's opportunity. The Protestant Liberals, the middle classes, and the Catholic clergy, shocked by the excesses which they saw occurring in France, deserted the party, and soon, instead of the whole nation, save the landlord oligarchy, the Government had only to deal with a small knot of revolutionaries, unsupported by the inert mass of the people. After 1793 it was able to disband and disarm the Volunteers. Their chiefs, Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, went to seek aid in France, and Hoche made a vain attempt to land at Bantry Bay. A short period of conciliation followed under Lord Fitzwilliam. But he was recalled, to the intense grief of the Irish, in 1796, and the party of coercion gained the upper hand in the "Castle." They threw down the religious question as an apple of discord between Catholic and Protestant, and, with the help of the Orange Society, which was just then founded in Ulster, they succeeded in stirring up a religious war, which put an

end to all spirit of independence and nationality. To bring matters to a head Fitzgibbon, at Pitt's instigation, provoked the rising of 1798, which Pitt believed inevitable, by measures of excessive cruelty. They let loose " upon the homes of the peasantry," writes Goldwin Smith,[2] " the license and barbarity of an irregular soldiery more cruel than a regular invader. Flogging, half-hanging, pitch-capping, picketing, went on over a large district, and the most barbarous scourgings without trial were inflicted in the Riding-house at Dublin, in the very seat of government and justice . . . . . It appears not unlikely that the peasantry . . . . . might have been kept quiet by measures of lenity and firmness, and that they were gratuitously scourged and tortured into open rebellion."

This famous insurrection which broke out in 1798 was merely a rising of peasants maddened by provocation. The Protestant gentry, well armed and assisted by the English troops, had small difficulty in slaughtering them. Lord Edward Fitzgerald was cast into prison, where he died of his wounds. The insurgents were defeated at New Ross and at Vinegar Hill. Humbert defeated the English at Castlebar, but capitulated in presence of Cornwallis. Wolfe Tone was captured, tried, and condemned to death, though wearing a French uniform ; he committed suicide. An Orange reign of terror followed, " hardly less atrocious," writes Thorold Rogers, " though better concerted, than the Massacres of September and the Fusillade at Lyons." The loyalist faction in Ireland " must take its place in history," according to Goldwin Smith, " beside Robespierre, Couthon and Carrier."[3] But the end sought for had been attained. The Irish people were once more crushed, and the Anglo-Saxon

2 *Irish History and Character*, p. 170.

3 *Op. cit.*, p. 174. See the correspondence of Cornwallis (Vol. II.). and Madden's work on the *United Irishmen* for the story of the massacres and horrors of which the Irish gentry were guilty.

oligarchy was confirmed in its privileges. England had achieved her purpose, and she laid her measures to take vengeance on the rebellious island, for the humiliation of 1782 and the eighteen years of Irish independence, by placing it in lasting bondage under the "Act of Union."

The Union of 1800 was the immediate outcome of the insurrection of 1798 as it was the less immediate result of the Revolution of 1782. The Irish Parliament had sought emancipation ; it paid the penalty of destruction, and was merged in the Parliament of Westminster. A legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland was carried out, and henceforth there was to be but one United Kingdom in place of the two separate States. It was England's duty to take over the government of the sister isle herself, since the English "garrison" had failed in the task. The Union was the only possible method of protecting the Protestant "colony" in Ireland and maintaining Cromwell's settlement. Moreover, the prosperity attained by Scotland under its Union was a precedent of good augury. These were the reasons put forward by William Pitt, the author of the Union. But the truth was that England wished to have done with the Irish nation, the Irish Parliament, and the rights of Ireland. Pitt could have imposed the Union upon Ireland by force, but he preferred to carry it through by corruption, and to make the Parliament of Ireland pay the price of its own destruction. All the unbribed intellect of Ireland was wholly against the Union, as Lecky tells us. But every official who opposed it was dismissed from his place. Moreover, the immediate concession of religious liberty and Catholic emancipation was promised, gifts for which, however, the Catholics had, in the event, to wait twenty-nine years. Votes were bought by the hundred. The owners of rotten boroughs received an indemnity. Peers and Members of Parliament were won over by pensions, titles, and money-bribes. The transaction cost a million and a half of money, which, by a supreme stroke of

irony, was debited to the separate National Debt of Ireland. "There is no blacker or fouler transaction in the history of man," declared Gladstone, "than the making of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland."[4]

4 Three years after the Union a young Irishman, twenty-five years of age, who had had a brilliant career at Trinity College, having sought aid from Napoleon, organised a conspiracy against the English Government in Ireland. On the 25th July, 1803, he marched on Dublin Castle at the head of a few hundred men. The raid failed, but not before the maddened crowd of rebels had murdered the old Chief Justice, Lord Kilwarden, with their pikes. Their chief, with some faithful friends, took refuge in the Wicklow mountains. Having returned to Dublin to see his sweetheart, Sarah Curran, before leaving for France, he was captured, tried, and hanged. His youth, his noble patriotism, the purity of his life, and of his love, have made Robert Emmet one of the favourite heroes of the Irish people. See *Robert Emmet*, by the late Comtesse d' Haussonville, Paris, 1858. See also the fine pages of George Brandes on Emmet and the Patriot United Irishmen. *Die Litteratur des 19th Jahrhunderts in Ihren Hauptstroemungen IV.*, p. 182 to 221. (*Irische Oppositionspoesie*), Leipsic, 1900.

CHAPTER II.—SINCE THE UNION.[1]

THERE runs through the history of Ireland during the nineteenth century a sort of systematic rise and fall that is distressing to contemplate. The movement in which each effort took shape differed very little from the one that went before it and the one that was to come after it. Between them there intervened periods of dire national prostration and universal distress. At such times the nation seemed, as it were, dead, and the people lay inert, an easy prey to every form of corruption. The cause at stake in each movement was indeed different. But in each the people had to encounter the same difficulties, fell into the same errors, suffered from the same illusions. In each movement we find the same lack of preparation and perseverance, the same want of completeness. Favourable opportunities were ever let slip. The movements did not always end in failure, but they never achieved more than partial success. The same tragedy was re-enacted in every generation upon the same stage with dreary monotony. The actors alone were changed.

1 See especially on the history of Ireland in the 19th century the following general works :—Edouard Hervé, *la Crise Irlandaise*, Paris, 1885. F. de Pressensé, *l'Irlande et l'Angleterre depuis l'Acte d'Union jusqu'à nos jours*, Paris, 1889. O'Connor Morris, *Ireland from* 1798 *to* 1898, London, 1898. J. H. MacCarthy, *Ireland since the Union*, London, 1887. A. M. Sullivan, *New Ireland*, London, 1877. W. E. H. Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, 2nd edition, London, 1871, and 3rd edition, London, 1903. R. Barry O'Brien, *Fifty Years Concessions to Ireland*, London, 1883-1885. By the same author, *Irish Wrongs and English Remedies*, London, 1887. By the same author, *A Hundred Years of Irish History*, London, 1902. T. P. O'Connor, *The Parnell Movement*, London, 1886. Isaac Butt, *Irish People and Irish Land*, London, 1867. Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, London and New York, 1904. Sir J. Barrington, *Sketches of his Own Times*, London, 1869. *Greville Memoirs*, London, 1885.

Throughout all these vicissitudes another contest is seen in progress. There were at all times two rival factions side by side in the Irish camp. On one side stood constitutional agitation within the law, an agitation open and unconcealed, loud-voiced, aiming not at complete separation from England, but at the attainment of self-government for Ireland. On the other side we find Fenianism, or the "Physical Force Movement," as the Irish call it. Secret in its methods, uncompromising in its ends, it recked little what means it should employ to achieve by revolution that complete separation from Britain at which it aimed. Between these two movements there was established a sort of oscillation. As either of them grew weaker the other invariably grew stronger. No sooner did the Government suppress legal agitation than an agitation of an illegal character took its place.

On the English side there is the like weary monotony. The fervent patriotism, the passionate enthusiasm of the Irish, is countered by inertia combined with a rooted egotism and indifference. In each generation throughout the century affairs passed through the same cycle. First there is the definite refusal to listen to Irish grievances; complaints are treated with mockery and insult; statesmen shrug their shoulders and adopt an attitude of *non-possumus*. Then the Irish begin to support their demands by acts of violence. The Government reply by passing Coercion Acts—that is to say, a sort of "martial law," or "law of suspects," contenting themselves, in Lord Cowper's phrase, with driving discontent beneath the surface. Forgetting the famous saying of John Bright that "force is no remedy," they adopt a policy of mere repression unaccompanied by reform. Meantime, anarchy continues to increase, till at last, in the hope of putting a stop to it, the Government is forced to give way. They surrender, but only when matters have reached the worst pass, and they are induced to do so not by considerations of justice, but by dread of revolution. A premium was thus put upon disorder. Civil war was positively

encouraged, and the Irish were not slow to draw the moral. They soon perceived that no reform could be obtained from England upon its merits, that there was nothing but could be won by agitation. Gladstone himself declared that had it not been for the Land League the Land Act of 1881 would never have been passed. And before Gladstone's time, Lord John Russell, also a Liberal, had said bluntly to his fellow-countrymen: "Your oppressions have taught the Irish to hate, your concessions to brave you. You have exhibited to them how scanty was the stream of your bounty, how full the tribute of your fear."[2] Again, had English concessions ever been broad and honest measures, serious and straightforward attempts to settle questions, Ireland might have been conciliated, and perhaps cured. But the English at all times neglected the advice of Grattan, that refusals should ever be polite, concessions gracious. Worse still, these tardy reforms, wrung from England against her will, failed in their effect for the most part. They did not go far enough, were sometimes purely illusory, and at all times bought at too dear a price. Ireland had need of courageous and drastic remedies. English legislation was hesitating and insufficient. It required, for instance, no less than five Land Acts from 1881 to 1896 to organise the system of judicial rent-fixing. Again, England sought to impose on Ireland her own legislative notions, her Poor Law and her system of education, for instance, and never stopped to consider whether such ideas were repugnant to the feelings of Irishmen, whether, as Lord Rosebery put it, Irishmen might not prefer their own familiar potatoes to the truffles which they neither knew nor appreciated. The English Government made it a point never to consult Irishmen as to what remedies should be applied. In the words of Swift, they sent the medicine from a distance, and had it applied by a doctor who knew neither the patient nor the malady.

[2] Quoted by Barry R. O'Brien, *A Hundred Years of Irish History*, p. 119 and 122.

The more liberal the English Parliament shows itself in its dealings with Scotland, the more illiberal it is in its treatment of Ireland. It never gets beyond half measures and compromises; takes away with one hand what it gives with the other; and clogs every concession with conditions which practically cancel it. Two examples out of a great number will suffice. A system of outdoor relief for the poor was instituted by an Act of the year 1838. All peasants who worked a quarter of an acre or more, that is to say, the great majority of Irish peasants, were excluded from its operation. In the same year the peasants were relieved from paying tithes to the Protestant Church, and the tithes were put upon the landlords. But the landlords were left free to raise the rents by a corresponding amount. In the result, the peasants remained liable to the same burden as before, but had not the same opportunities of complaint. In everything else it was the same. Ireland soon came to rate at their true value those magnanimous concessions made by British Liberalism, those cunning and illusory devices which took away the shadow of a grievance and left the substance.

I.—O'Connell.[3]

In the year 1800, after the passing of the Act of Union, as in 1691 after the Treaty of Limerick, a favourable opportunity was offered to the English Government of redeeming the past and conciliating Ireland, by adopting a policy of concord and good will. In Grattan's phrase,

3 See especially, on the period 1800-1847, the works of Sidney Smith; the Life, Memoirs and Correspondence of Melbourne, Palmerston, and Peel; the Speeches of O'Connell and Shiel. Th. Wyse, *Historical Sketch of the Catholic Association*, London, 1829. *Life, Times and Correspondence of Right Rev. Doctor Doyle*, by W. J. Fitzpatrick, Dublin, 1880. Sir C. G. Duffy, *Young Ireland*, London, 1880, and *Four Years of Irish History*, London, 1883. Shaw Lefevre, *Peel and O'Connell*, London, 1887. Guizot, *Sir Robert Peel*, Paris, 1856. Fitzpatrick, *D. O'Connell's Correspondence*, London, 1888. Barry O'Brien, *Th. Drummond*, London, 1889. Canon O'Rourke, *Life of O'Connell*, London, 1875. MacLennan, *Life of Thomas Drummond*, Edinburgh, 1867. *Cf.* Nemours Godre, *Daniel O'Connell*, Paris, 1893.

the marriage had been brought about, and it now remained to make it fruitful. The two parliaments had been united. It remained to unite the two peoples, to bring the different classes together, to adopt measures of reparation, which should make up to Ireland for the evils wrought by commercial restraints and Penal Laws. This was precisely the policy that the English Government did not adopt. The Government had been centralised. The governed were neither reconciled nor united. Nay more, by the suppression of the Irish Parliament and the fusion of the two legislatures, the chasm between the two nations was widened.

"It was much less," writes G. de Beaumont,[4] "the union of Ireland to England than an alliance between the English and the Protestant party in Ireland, who, being no longer able to govern Ireland, threw themselves into the arms of their ruler and handed over to him every instrument of tyranny and persecution, on condition that they should share in that tyranny as heretofore."

After the Union, as before it, Ireland remained a "colony," or "dependency." Its government was marred by all the abuses and all the oppression which that form of rule connotes. Government was based upon force or upon corruption. Coercion Acts became a permanent institution; and while the supreme power of the Ascendancy remained, it was relieved of all sense of responsibility, robbed even of that glamour of patriotism which had formerly illumed its actions, and left freer than ever to oppress the Catholics of Ireland, whom England abandoned to its mercy.

The Catholics of Ireland, indeed, after the Union, lay prostrate in a state of utter exhaustion and torpid despair. There was no hope for them. They were, to use a famous phrase, "like a corpse on the dissecting table." Public spirit was dead amongst them. "The country," as Shiel said, "was in a state of degrading and unwholesome tranquillity. We sat down like galley slaves in a calm

[4] *Op. cit.* II., 17.

. . . the public pulse had stopped . . . and the country was palsied to the heart." This was the result at once of the Penal Laws and of the reaction that followed on the insurrection.

"By long bending they had become bent," writes Dr. Wyse; "their mind, like a human body long confined within too small a prison, refused itself to the free functions of other citizens. The scourge had ceased and the fetter had been unlocked; but for years afterwards the brand and the scar remained behind."[5]

The Catholic religion enjoyed, relatively speaking, a considerable degree of tolerance. Men were unwilling to risk this in seeking for something better. The idea that they might perhaps provoke a revival of the Penal Laws was enough to strike terror into them. The statesmen who had negotiated the Act of Union had made a solemn promise of complete emancipation to the Irish Papists. But, just as after Limerick, the promise was destined to be broken. Every year the Protestant Liberal members of Parliament, Grattan, Ponsonby and Plunket, demanded that the Parliament should carry out Pitt's undertaking. It was mere waste of time. The King, George III., had sworn that Catholic emancipation should never be passed during his lifetime.

The Catholics, moreover, were divided among themselves. There had existed in Ireland since the year 1760 a league, which, under various names, such as the Catholic Committee or the Catholic Association, had been working to obtain Catholic emancipation. Two rival parties existed in it, the middle class or popular party led by John Keogh, and the party of the Catholic gentry, led first by Lord Kenmare and later by Lord Fingall. These latter, though prevented by their religion from belonging to the Ascendancy, were, from a political point of view, in sympathy with it. Being out of sympathy with the popular party, these "*ralliés*" found themselves at variance with it on many points, but most of all on the

5 Thomas Wyse, *Historical Sketch of the Catholic Association*, I., 53.

question of the "Veto," a matter which was under discussion throughout the first quarter of the century. They sought to secure the payment of the clergy, the State in return receiving a veto on the appointment of Bishops. The project had in the end to be dropped, owing to the popular opposition which it provoked. These divisions rendered the Catholic league powerless. Socially and politically things grew worse and worse. There was a famine almost every year, those of 1817 and 1825 being particularly bad. The Government could find no remedy other than Coercion Acts, of which there were twenty between 1800 and 1820. "There was no law for the Catholics." The powers of the Protestant Oligarchy were increased. "The squireens, the slave-drivers of Ireland,"[6] were allowed to oppress the poor as they liked. Orange societies rapidly multiplied and devoted themselves to organising attacks upon the Catholics. The Catholics met violence with violence, crime, Whiteboyism, or Ribbonism. All open opposition was suppressed, and conspiracy took its place. The government of Ireland was in those days a government of landlordism tempered by assassination.

A man now came upon the scene who was to rouse the people from their state of torpid prostration, who, in his own words, "was to sound the resurrection trumpet and show that she was not dead but sleeping."[7] This man was Daniel O'Connell. By birth he belonged to the upper classes.[8] His instincts were essentially conservative, but in temperament he was a democrat, almost a demagogue. For he was "a man of the people" down to the very depths of his being. Like the people themselves, he was rough, boisterous, arrogant, strong, needy, jovial, eager,

6 This phrase and the preceding one are taken from Dr. Doyle. (*Life, Times and Correspondence*, I., 382, 383).

7 Quoted by Lecky, *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, 3rd ed., II., 239.

8 His family belonged to the Kerry gentry, and was of Conservative tendencies. One of his uncles, Count O'Connell, served in the Irish Brigade and followed the Bourbons in the Emigration. Daniel O'Connell states himself that at the time of Robert Emmet's rising he was "almost a Tory." Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 4.

unrefined, good-natured and egotistical, possessed of a soul at once "royal and vulgar,"[9] and full of himself and of his power. The Irish Ascendancy hated him, as did the whole English people; the Protestant Liberals and even the Catholic gentry of Ireland regarded him with jealousy and dread. A typical Irishman at once in his strength and in his weaknesses, O'Connell was possessed of all the qualities which could enable him to rouse the Irish masses and lead them forth by the mere force of oratory into the ranks of the constitutional struggle. The Irish masses were abject and unresisting slaves. The fire of O'Connell's eloquence, his tone of defiance and of command, his power of invective, his intensity of conviction, all these combined to rouse up and influence his fellow-countrymen and give them confidence in their leader and in themselves. In addition to this he was a lawyer of consummate ability. His practice at the bar had made him quick to seize upon the weak points of a new law. He had unequalled skill in "driving a coach and four through an Act of Parliament." It was O'Connell who first originated "popular agitation within the law," and at once brought that new instrument for obtaining social reform to the highest pitch of perfection. Cobden and the English were in this matter his pupils; and all free peoples have since learnt the lesson. This weapon of popular constitutional agitation was needed to restore the courage of a people that had never known any other means of attaining liberty save insurrection.

O'Connell was violent, but his violence was only of words. Physical violence he consistently denounced. Moral force was all he sought to employ. "There is a moral electricity in the continuous expression of public opinion concentrated upon a single point, perfectly irresistible in its efficacy."[10]

The multitude must bear all before it; but who was there to organise it, to unify it, to put it in motion?

9 John Mitchel, *Jail Journal*, p. 139.

10 Quoted by Lecky, *op. cit.* II., 242.

The question admitted of only one answer. The priests were the sole advisers the people had. Two Bishops, both of them famous Irishmen, Dr. Doyle and Dr. MacHale, had already prepared men's minds for the movement. In 1823 O'Connell, with Shiel's assistance, had re-organised the old Catholic Association. The Liberal Protestants and the Catholic gentry joined, as did also the two bishops. The whole of the clergy followed their example. The Catholic Association was before long spread throughout all Ireland, and the entire country enrolled under its banner. Suppressed by the Government, it re-appeared under another name. The clergy and the Association combined to urge the people to action. They protected them against their landlords, roused them to exercise independence as voters, and saved them from the consequences of doing so. Meetings were held everywhere. Every man paid his share of the "Catholic Rent." After five years of agitation, carried on by legal means, the Association achieved its object. In 1828 O'Connell had himself been elected as member for Clare, though, as a Catholic, he was at that time unable to take his seat. In the following year the Government, at long last, granted Catholic Emancipation.[11] But it had to be bought at a dear price, for it was only granted on condition that the forty shilling freeholders should be deprived of their votes, and the electorate of Ireland thus reduced from about 200,000 to 26,000. None the less, it was a great victory for "agitation within the law," and still more so for the man who had brought that agitation into being, and was henceforth to be known by the title of the Liberator.

Encouraged by this first success, while the clergy were occupied by the tithe war, or in repressing the excesses of the soldiery on the one hand, or the "Whiteboys" and their successors the "Ribbonmen" on the other, O'Connell

[11] That is to say, that share of it which it remained to grant, the right of Catholics to be members of parliament, and to be admitted to all public positions.

was devising a fresh campaign. This time he sought to secure by agitation, within the law, the repeal of the Act of Union. Repeal was not a novel idea. Shortly after the Union it had been pressed forward, strange as it may seem, by Tory Protestants and Orangemen. But now things had changed. The Protestants had been beaten by the Papists and the "agitator." They would no longer listen to proposals for Repeal. The same attitude was taken up by Protestant Liberals, who, together with the Catholic gentry, now abandoned O'Connell. Protestant Ireland for the first time declared itself definitely "Unionist." O'Connell, moreover, for some years suspended all agitation and supported Lord Melbourne's ministry at Westminster from 1835 to 1840; the Irish members for the first time allied themselves with the English Whigs. Ireland gained little by the compact, and no reforms of any importance were carried out, although Thomas Drummond, a Scotchman who was Under-Secretary in Dublin, distinguished himself by his courage in seeking to bring landlords and Orangemen to reason. At last the alliance was broken, and O'Connell once again took up the agitation for Repeal. As on former occasions, he received the support of the clergy, and also consented to receive that of a group of young enthusiasts, who styled themselves "Young Ireland," in contradistinction to their aged leader. The Repeal Association spread rapidly. The Repeal Rent rapidly increased, and the country seemed on the eve of great happenings. In 1842 O'Connell promised that "Repeal" would be passed in the following year. The year 1843 was, in fact, the year of crisis. The agitation was then at its height; the enthusiasm was immense; popular demonstrations, attended by enormous multitudes of persons, were held throughout the country. Two hundred and fifty thousand persons took part in one of them, which was held at the Hill of Tara, the site of the palace of the ancient kings. At none of these "monster meetings" was there any disturbance. Perfect discipline was maintained—a

result due to the influence of the "Liberator," and to that of the famous Father Mathew, who was then preaching his temperance crusade with unparalleled success. But every man was stirred to the depths when O'Connell menaced the Government and pledged himself to resistance. "Are the Irish to be treated as slaves? Will they submit to be trampled under foot? Let our enemies attack us if they dare, they shall never trample me under their feet. If they do so it will be my dead body." The crisis was grave. O'Connell made every effort to avert a conflict. But popular excitement as a result of these politics at high pressure had risen to a point at which it could with difficulty be restrained from bursting forth into open rebellion. This was what men anticipated on all sides. "The Counsellor[12] will give us the word," they said.

Instead of giving the order to advance at the famous Clontarf meeting the Counsellor sounded the retreat. On the morning of the meeting it was illegally "proclaimed" by "the Castle." From all sides the long processions of those about to take part in the demonstration were marching in. The troops assumed a threatening attitude, and agitation "within the law" seemed about to end in open conflict after all.

The expectation was mistaken. "No revolution is worth the spilling of one single drop of human blood."[13] The great agitator gave the order to disperse; the "proclaimed" meeting would not take place. The man of peace gave way. Twenty years earlier things might have been different. But O'Connell was old—he was aged sixty-eight—and worn out. The memory of the blood he had shed in his duel with d'Esterre weighed upon his mind. A dread of violence possessed him, and he yielded to fear. That day destroyed the trust of the people in their leader, and ruined the cause for which he had laboured. Not

[12] Lecky, *op. cit.*, II., 242, 243. O'Connell was called "the Counsellor," as Swift had been called "the Dean."

[13] A phrase of O'Connell's quoted by Lecky. *Op. cit.* II., 263, 264.

long afterwards he was put upon his trial and found guilty by a jury of Orangemen. His sentence was quashed by the House of Lords; but his release from gaol was destined to be his last triumph, and, worn out by illness, he retired from public life. Later he sought to return to it, abandoned Repeal for a vain policy of Federalism, entered into alliance with the English Whigs, and saw himself repudiated by the Young Irelanders. He lived on for some months in absolute inaction, to see the earlier horrors of the Great Famine; set out upon a journey to the Eternal City, and died at Genoa on the 15th May, 1847, leaving his body to Ireland, his heart to Rome.

It is difficult to pass judgment on O'Connell. It might truly be said that for more than thirty years he embodied in his single person the whole spirit of the Irish nation. The English judge him by his faults, the violence of the demagogue, the bombast of the popular orator. He made agitation a trade, they say, and levied payments for his services in the shape of the tribute. He was a patriot for pay—the "Big Beggarman." They forget that English oppression had made agitation a stern necessity in Ireland and that Fox and Pitt, Cobden and Bright, received financial assistance from their party, just as did O'Connell. In his own country the men of "Young Ireland" looked upon "Old Dan" with contempt. The "Physical Force" party have even regarded him with open hatred. Not long after his death, Father Kenyon, a priest and a "Young Irelander," described him as a "Grand homme manqué." John Mitchel, the revolutionary, declared that "next to the British Government he was the greatest enemy Ireland ever had." But the great mass of his contemporaries took a different view. They looked upon him as the "Liberator," and honoured him with that title in his own lifetime, and, on the whole, posterity has ratified this judgment. In many respects he may truly be called the father of modern Ireland and modern Irish democracy. In political matters, like Rieger in

Bohemia.[14] he roused his people from lethargy and gave them the desire to think and act. He made the public opinion of Ireland a factor with which England must reckon for the future. Whatever view we take of his work, we cannot help criticising it severely in certain directions. In three matters especially he is open to attack. First, he helped on the Anglicisation of Ireland. He neglected the Irish language, as far as he was personally concerned, and by entering into alliance with the Whigs, he fixed the attention of Irishmen entirely upon Westminster. Then again, having once aroused public opinion, he sought neither to form nor to educate it, but used it to make himself dictator, suffering none to oppose his wishes. He left behind him in Ireland, says an historian,[15] "a great memory, but not a great party."

Lastly, he believed that "agitation within the law," of which he was the originator—a powerful weapon indeed —to be all-powerful. He would have nothing to do with any other method. In this he was clearly wrong. Moral force, unhappily, is not all-powerful. In many cases it must inevitably end in open conflict. O'Connell declared that no human revolution was worth the spilling of a single drop of blood. For twenty-five years this doctrine of cowardice, "which could hardly be accepted in its literal sense by anyone except Quakers,"[16] says Lecky, weighed the country down. It is proved untrue by the whole history of modern liberty. Might it not, indeed, with more justice be said that only those causes are great which have to be defended at the cost of innocent blood ?

[14] An interesting parallel might be established between Rieger and O'Connell. Both were opportunists in the best sense of the word ; glory, and, in old age, unpopularity, was the portion of both. Both saw the uprise of a more extreme party which the country preferred. But O'Connell did not, like Rieger, survive his defeat.

[15] Sir C. G. Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, p. 399.

[16] *Op. cit.* II., 289.

II.—Young Ireland and the Revolution of 1848.[1]

It was this dread of battle on the part of the grand old campaigner that drove "Young Ireland" to despair. Under that title were comprised the group of ardent new-comers, who had thrown themselves into the Repeal movement since 1841 or 1842. They were "intellectuals," young men for the most part. Sprung from the most diverse classes, they were united in a common enthusiasm and love of country. The greatest man among them was Thomas Davis. A deep thinker, an idealist, a poet of untainted soul, his lofty genius won universal respect. He was fated to die in 1845 in his thirty-fourth year, but his teachings will never be forgotten by his country. There were also John Blake Dillon, Charles Gavan Duffy, D'Arcy MacGee, Thomas Francis Meagher, and John Mitchel. There was Smith O'Brien, a descendant of the illustrious family of O'Brien, the Earls of Thomond. Finally, there was a band of brilliant writers, James Clarence Mangan, John O'Hagan, Samuel Ferguson, and John Kells Ingram. Many of them were Protestants, but all were filled with a generous ardour for the welfare of Ireland. But what could they do to help her? This was the question that Davis, Dillon, and Duffy put to themselves as they were walking in the Phœnix Park near Dublin one fine summer evening in 1842. They decided to undertake the duty which O'Connell had neglected, namely, to form and educate public opinion, and as a means to that end to found a newspaper. Yet it was not to be a newspaper, but rather an instrument for the education of the people; in which every week in inspired verse, and in burning prose, they might send forth to the country a message of sympathy and self-respect, of

1 See especially John Mitchel, *Jail Journal*, New York, 1854. Dillon, *Life of John Mitchel*, London, 1888. *Poems* and *Essays* of Thomas Davis. *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*, edited by Sir C. G. Duffy, 40th edition, London, 1869. *The Spirit of the Nation* (Dublin). an anthology of the Young Ireland Poets.

patriotism and of tolerance. Shortly afterwards the *Nation* appeared. Its success was immediate, and beyond all expectations. It took men of every class, save only the peasantry, by storm. The whole country, even the Protestants, were deeply moved. Public spirit was ennobled and purified, and in a few months the greater part of the nation was won over without a struggle to the new ideas. The concept of nationality preached by " Young Ireland " was far loftier than that which passed current with the preceding generation. O'Connell was interested only in the material grievances of his countrymen. But with Davis nationality was something above politics, a something founded on language and literature, on history and tradition.[2] Again, for O'Connell, Ireland meant only Catholic Ireland. Davis and his disciples preached the union of all creeds and classes, and as a natural corollary, religious tolerance. " Orange and Green will carry the day." The older men looked upon the Young Irelanders as free thinkers. The Young Irelanders in return regarded them as clericals. There was yet another distinction. O'Connell led the people but never sought to educate them. Young Ireland, on the contrary, sought to free Ireland by forming public opinion—" Educate that you may be free " was its motto. It sought to turn the thoughts of the people towards their past, to educate them by historical publications, to fire them with popular poetry.[3] The ballad became almost an institution in Ireland.[4]

Young Ireland refused to accept O'Connell's view as to moral force. It revolted against the excessive power of the priests, against the tyranny of the " leader," against the spirit of corruption and faction that then prevailed. It opposed the alliance between the Irish party and the English Whigs, which had reduced the former to a mere Whig wing of England and turned Nationalist politics into a mere scramble for places. It hoped to maintain an

[2] See the programme of the *Nation* in *Young Ireland*, p. 80.
[3] See the *Library of Ireland*, edited by Duffy.
[4] See the *Spirit of the Nation*.

independent party of disinterested men at Westminster and to stir up in Ireland a movement that should be at once bolder in its methods and loftier and less utilitarian in its aims.

With all these sharp points of difference between "Young Ireland" and what for the future was to be known as "Old Ireland," an open rupture was bound to come about sooner or later. It had been threatening ever since O'Connell's retreat at Clontarf. It occurred finally as the result of a discussion about those provincial universities, the Queen's Colleges. Sad times followed for Ireland. The country was divided against itself. O'Connell died and left none to succeed him, and Davis himself was just dead. The great Famine broke out. But worse was to come. In the ranks of Young Ireland itself there arose a new schism. The leader of the Young Ireland party at this time was William Smith O'Brien. He was a man of patriotism and integrity, but conservative by temperament, and strongly opposed to all revolutionary ideas.[5] Such ideas, however, had been rapidly gaining ground in the party. The failure of the "moral force" agitation, the wretched condition of Ireland, and the horrors of the famine which the Government had done nothing to relieve, all these combined to bring revolutionary ideas to the front. Towards the end of the year 1847 the advocates of "Physical Force" no longer hesitated to proclaim themselves. The "Montagnards," Mitchel, Meagher and others, separated from the "Girondins." The latter were not, indeed, opposed to methods of violence, but they looked upon such methods as a desperate expedient that should only be had recourse to after long preparation. The former took the opposite view. Ireland could only be saved by blood and iron. They were for an immediate rising, a holy war that should "sweep the island clear of the English name and nation." With a reformer of the stamp of Davis the dominant

5 "There is too much Smith and too little O'Brien," said somebody at the time. *Young Ireland*, p. 559.

passion was love of Ireland; with a revolutionary such as Mitchel it was hatred of England. The former hoped to conciliate, to assimilate the gentry of English descent; the latter thought only of destroying it. The one sought to educate the Irish and bring about a moral reform; the sole aim of the other was to rouse them to rebellion, whatever their unpreparedness, whatever the cost. Thus between Mitchel and Davis, both of them Protestants, there existed a gulf no less wide than between Davis and the Catholic O'Connell.[6]

John Mitchel and the "war party" were expelled from the *Nation*. On the 12th February, 1848, he brought out the first number of his new paper, the *United Irishman*, in which he openly preached risings and street fighting. He called the Lord Lieutenant (Lord Clarendon) her Majesty's Executioner General and General Butcher of Ireland. The public were astonished. They looked upon him as a madman. But a fortnight later the revolution broke out in Paris. In quick succession came revolutions in Berlin, Vienna, Prague and Italy. Ireland caught the contagion. The whole country was fired. A chance of repeating 1782 seemed to have presented itself. Mitchel became the hero of the hour. All the Young Irelanders, even Smith O'Brien himself, were seized by the fever. Clubs of Confederates were organised through the country. A "national guard" began to drill and practice arms. Unhappily, divisions continued to be rife among the leaders. Mitchel was for instant action. He redoubled the violence of his articles in the *United Irishman*, with the aim of provoking an immediate conflict. They had no plans, no military leaders; what did that matter? Had they any at Paris or at Berlin? Long live the Irish Republic! The Young Irelanders, on the other hand, wished to wait for the summer and thus have time for

6 As to *John Mitchel* see the excellent study by E. Montégut. *L'Exil de la Jeune Irlande* in *Choses du Nord et du Midi*, Paris, 1886. John Mitchel was not a mere fanatic. He was, intellectually, the most brilliant of the Young Irelanders. See his criticism of Macaulay and Bacon in his *Jail Journal*. He was a writer of exceptional power.

preparation. In his heart Smith O'Brien would have liked to play the part of Lafayette and make terms with the Government. He reproached the "Reds" with encouraging acts of individual violence. They on their side treated him as an aristocrat, and a "rose-water revolutionary." The English Government profited by these dissensions to nip the rising in the bud. It secretly armed the Orangemen, put Dublin under military occupation, and struck its blow by the arrest of Mitchel. On the 20th May he was condemned to transportation, and was instantly placed on board a war vessel. By the loss of their leader the insurgents were beaten in advance. But things had gone too far to turn back; the rising had to take place. It was hopeless to attempt it in Dublin. Smith O'Brien and his friends, as a counsel of despair, decided to try a rising in the country. They went through the country parts, organising bands, and possibly they might have made the south of Ireland a second Vendee had they not had to face the opposition of the clergy, who held back the people from the act of folly that was in preparation. The Insurrection of 1848 ended miserably in the tragi-comedy of the cabbage garden at Ballingarry. Abandoned by his improvised troops, that strange leader of rebellion, the Protestant landlord and aristocrat, Smith O'Brien, to save his honour, engaged in a sort of skirmish with a small body of police, who soon had him in their hands. The other leaders went into exile, or else were thrown into prison.

Thus direly and pitifully did the Young Ireland movement end in miscarriage. Men of broad mind and noble character, of proud spirit and personal courage, had brought it into being. But they had been lacking in practical qualities. They had no appreciation of the realities of life. The more violent spirits among them gained a complete empire over the rest and led them astray. The Young Ireland movement was not a revolutionary one, and yet it was to lead to revolution, and to perish through revolution. It had been a reaction against O'Connell's

opportunism and legality ; it had resisted the call to arms of the extreme party. But carried along by the explosion of ideas in 1848, Young Ireland found itself compelled by force of circumstances and by considerations of honour to have recourse itself to arms, at the most inopportune time and under the most unfavourable conditions, or else lie under the charge of cowardice or treason. Now "Young Ireland" was dead. Its leaders were scattered to the four winds of the heaven. Even its ideas seemed to have perished. In reality they survived the wreck, and reappeared at a later date, when the people had recovered from the dreadful crisis through which they were now to pass, between 1847 and 1849—a crisis in which the Irish nation seemed destined to be finally extinguished—the Great Famine.

III.—The Great Famine and Emigration.[1]

We must go back a little in order to indicate briefly the causes of the Great Famine of 1847. The enormous increase of the population of Ireland in the end of the eighteenth, and the first half of the nineteenth century was a striking phenomenon.[2] From 1782 on, and especially during the Napoleonic wars, when Ireland had become the granary of England, the country had passed through a period of great prosperity. Taking advantage of this, the landlords had multiplied the number of small holdings on their estates, as by this subdivision they increased the number of their voters and raised the total of their rents.

1 The Great Famine and The Period of Emigration :—See especially, W. P. O Brien, *The Great Famine*, Dublin. O'Rourke, *History of the Great Irish Famine*, 3rd Ed., Dublin, 1902. Sir Chas. E. Trevelyan, *The Irish Crisis* (*Edinburgh Review*, 1848). *Report of the Census Commissioners*, 1851. John Mitchel, *Jail Journal*. Sir C. G. Duffy, *The League of North and South*, London, 1886. *Writings of J. F. Lalor*, edited by John O'Leary. Lord Dufferin, *Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Irish Land*, London, 1867. Nassau Senior, *Journals' Conversations and Essays relating to Ireland*, 1868.

2 In 1788 the population was estimated for the first time at more than four millions (4,040,000). In 1845 it was reckoned at nearly 8 millions.

As a result, the population increased rapidly, and continued to increase notwithstanding a gradual change in economic conditions. On the conclusion of the war the rise in prices was succeeded by a fall. Tillage ceased to pay, and the landlords were naturally tempted to turn the agricultural lands into pasture. A campaign of "Clearances" was inaugurated and continued without intermission. It became especially vigorous when by the Act of 1829 the smaller peasants were deprived of the right of voting. The tenantry were driven out, and their houses razed to the ground. Holdings were "consolidated." Parliament looked on complacently, and passed laws to make ejectment an inexpensive process. As there were no industries to relieve the pressure, the people crowded in upon such remnants of the soil as were left to them. They were compelled to pay famine rents, which, as John Stuart Mill put it, scarcely left them enough to stave off death from starvation. They lived on potatoes as the Chinese live on rice. Were a bad harvest to come a catastrophe must inevitably ensue.

There came not one bad harvest, but three in succession. In the autumn of 1845 three-quarters of the potato crop was destroyed in a few days by a form of blight hitherto unknown. In 1846 and 1847 the whole potato crop perished. From 1846 to 1849 famine reigned throughout the land. No sooner did the plague touch them than the people seemed plunged in a sort of stupor.

"It was no uncommon sight to see the cottier and his little family seated on the garden fence gazing all day long in moody silence at the blighted plot that had been their last hope. Nothing would rouse them. You spoke: they answered not; you tried to cheer them: they shook their heads."[3]

It is better, said John Mitchel, to perish by the bayonets of England than by her laws. But what were men to do, when death was all around them, at work or at home, in the houses and in the fields, on the mountains and in the

3 A. M. Sullivan, *New Ireland*, Ch. VI.

glens ? The workhouses, where no one had hitherto thought of setting foot, were soon filled. At Westport three thousand persons sought admission in one day, though there was no longer any room. One morning the porter found the corpses of eight persons who had died during the night, leaning against the railings.

The " Unions," from which relief might be obtained, were soon bankrupt. Some of them refused to do anything. In many places, as Mr. Tuke, a philanthropist, tells us, the roads " became as charnel houses." Drivers seldom went out without seeing dead bodies strewn along the roadside, without passing over them if it were night. Another eye-witness informs us that in his district on opening the front door in the morning it was " a common occurrence to find the corpse of some victim leaning against it, who in the night-time had rested in its shelter." All rites, both civil and religious, had to be given up. There were no coffins for the dead. The corpses were hastily carried off in a coffin with a movable bottom, from which they were thrown straight into a common grave.[4] Those who escaped the famine succumbed to the fever. Priests and doctors died by the hundred. Well-to-do families caught the malady and perished with none to aid them. It was a case of each man for himself. All who could, fled the country. The Irish turned their eyes towards America as the Jews of old towards Jerusalem. But emigrants had to endure sufferings almost as bitter as those who remained behind. The State at first exercised no supervision, and the emigrants were crowded into " coffin ships," in which they died in thousands during the course of the voyage. How many of her citizens, one naturally asks, did Ireland lose during those terrible years ? The number of those who perished of hunger has been reckoned at 729,033, " far more," as John Bright said, " than ever fell by the sword in any war England ever waged." [5]

4 O'Rourke, *History of the Great Irish Famine*, pp. 384, 393.

5 The figure is given by Mr. T. W. Grimshaw, Registrar-General, in *Facts and Figures about Ireland*, Dublin, 1893. The *Census Commis-*

The number of deaths among the emigrants has been reckoned at 17 per cent., that is, about 200,000. Lastly, it is calculated that from 1846 to 1851 1,240,737 emigrants left Ireland.[6] This was but the beginning of that emigration, which has never ceased down to the present time.

Could the Great Famine have been avoided, it may be asked? It is important to remember that the disease only affected a single crop, the potato crop; all others were up to the average both in quantity and in quality. In 1846 food stuffs and cattle to the value of £41,000,000 were produced on Irish soil; in 1847 food stuffs and cattle to the value of £38,500,000. During the most critical period of the famine, in 1846 and 1847, Ireland exported corn, barley, oats and cattle in far greater quantities than would have sufficed to feed the people.[7] It was not want of food stuffs that caused the famine. But the produce of the land was used up in paying the landlord's rent. There was famine in the midst of plenty. It was an artificial famine, for, as Mitchel declared:[8] "The exact complement of a comfortable family dinner in England is a Coroner's inquest in Ireland—verdict: starvation."

The Government made some attempt to avert the evil. But it did very little, and that little it did very ill. Its actions were characterised by stinginess and an entire failure to appreciate the situation. A blind attachment to the doctrines of the Manchester school, which was then at the beginning of its reign, made even its best intentioned efforts fail in their object. Sir Robert Peel began, after the English fashion, by introducing a Coercion Act. He then organised provision depots and public relief works, and in the spring of 1846, on the eve

sioners' Report of 1851, p. 246, gives 985,366 deaths, from 1846 to 1851. Bright's phrase was used in the House of Commons on the 25th August, 1848.

6 O'Rourke, *op. cit.* p. 499. Grimshaw, *loc. cit.*

7 T. P. O Connor, *Parnell Movement*, Ch. IV. Perraud, *op. cit.* I., 275.

8 *Jail Journal*, Introduction.

of his fall, passed his famous measure, establishing free trade in corn. England alone gained by this enactment. It would have been of more importance to Ireland that the export of corn should be prohibited than that its import should be freely permitted. His successor, Lord John Russell, stopped the great relief works, but later re-established them, making it a condition, however, that none of them should be of a reproductive nature, that is to say, of public benefit. Hills were excavated, and the excavations filled up. Highways were constructed that led nowhere. Hundreds of thousands of persons were thus employed at ridiculously small wages (as low as 5d. a day in some cases) under the control of 10,000 officials. But the people were too exhausted to work. The workmen in many cases on taking up the pick or shovel, were seized with illness and fell to the ground never to rise. More than £10,000,000 sterling was spent on these works. The money was not, indeed, given to the local authorities, but lent to them on the security of the rates.[9]

It should be added that the English public showed themselves more generous than the Government. Subscriptions were opened all over England, as also on the Continent. Relief committees and soup kitchens were established in each district. In 1847 the Government agreed to contribute towards their upkeep. This proved the only practical method of helping the afflicted people. It was regrettable that these soup kitchens were too often used as instruments of proselytism, and in other cases carried on with such a lack of dignity and control that, in the words of an eye-witness, "the feeding of dogs in a kennel was far more decent and orderly."

The Great Famine was an event entailing the gravest consequences—a turning-point in the history of Ireland. Not long before it an English official, when questioned about the discontent of the Irish peasantry, said that so far from being discontented, "they were as gay as larks,

9 *New Ireland*, Ch. VI.

damnably happy in their wretchedness." From this date the gay, laughing, generous, hospitable, open-handed, open-hearted Irishman of tradition ceased to exist. All joy had left the people ; cross-road dances and open-air sports became things of the past. Men grew to be egoistic pessimists, and the hatred of England and of the landlords sank deeper than ever into their souls. The land question in its modern form first took shape about this time. From 1848 on, James Fintan Lalor began, in the *Irish Felon*, to preach the extermination of the landlords and the dividing up of the lands. At this time, too, began that great exodus of emigrants from Ireland which has been draining the country and exhausting the race for more than half a century. It continued when the famine had ended, because the causes that brought it about —the evictions and the great clearances—also continued. "The Irish are flying with a vengeance," declared the *Times* triumphantly about this period. From 1851 to 1860 a million and a half Irishmen emigrated to that "greater Ireland" whither they carried their hatred of England and their desire for vengeance. Henceforward America was to exercise a most important influence on the affairs of Ireland. From America was soon to come a new element in the Irish question—Fenianism.

IV.—Fenianism. [1]

It was the name of Fenianism that was new rather than the thing itself. In reality Fenianism was but a revival and re-organisation. on a more systematic plan, with improved resources, and above all, with American assistance, of that "Physical Force" policy, which had at all times exercised an influence on Irish politics. This had

1 See especially, John O Leary, Fenianism—*Fenians and Fenianism*, London, 1896. Gerald Fitzgibbon, *Ireland in* 1868, London, 1868. Sir C. G. Duffy, *The League of North and South*, London, 1886. *Speeches from the Dock*, edited by T. D. and A. M. Sullivan. *Cf.* G. Sigerson, *Modern Ireland*, London, 1868.

been the policy of the revolutionaries in 1798 and 1848; it may even be said to have been that of the agrarian secret societies such as the Whiteboys and the Ribbonmen.[2]

During the fifteen years or so that followed the Great Famine and the Rebellion of 1848, the country, maimed and exhausted, and without any organisation, employing methods within the law, remained sunk in a condition of torpor and demoralisation. Corruption reigned supreme in public life; the people could do nothing. The clergy were under the domination of a reactionary prelate, and took little part in public life, save to support the Whig candidate who was in favour for the moment at elections —a "Castle" Catholic, or even a Protestant, who usually regarded politics merely as a means to promotion. Of the Young Irelanders of former days but a few scattered individuals remained who had been converted to constitutionalism since the failure of 1848. One of these was Gavan Duffy, who had tried to revive the national spirit in 1851. He had united North and South in an agrarian league—the Irish Tenant League—and had endeavoured to form an independent parliamentary party, which might constitute a national opposition. Every member of the party was to pledge himself to accept neither honour nor emolument from the Government.

But a few months after its formation the new party was destroyed, through the treachery of two of its members—the famous Sadleir and Keogh, a pair of political adventurers whom the Government had little difficulty in buying over. It was a painful sign of the times that, notwithstanding their treachery, the majority of the clergy, under the influence of Cardinal Cullen, continued to support them till their fall.

In 1858 the apparent calm was troubled by a trifling

[2] The Ribbon Society had been the most important among the secret societies that took part in the agrarian struggle in Ireland at the time of the Tithe War (1830-1838). Towards the middle of the century it had absorbed most of the other organisations. See Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism*, p. 40 *et seq.*

disturbance, which no one took seriously. The members of a secret society, the " Phœnix Society " had organised a small conspiracy at Skibbereen in the County Cork. The Government found out the plot and quickly put it down. Such was the condition of general prostration that the affair excited derision rather than astonishment. But there was more in it than appeared. The real leader at Skibbereen, James Stephens, an old '48 rebel, had escaped. From this time forward he devoted himself, with the assistance of O'Donovan Rossa, O'Leary and Kickham, to preparing a more widely extended movement, under the title of the " Irish Republican Brotherhood." In America another revolutionary named O'Mahony proceeded to organise a militia, which he called the Fenians, the name given to the ancient warriors in the time of Fionn and his companions. The Catholic clergy denounced the movement. The constitutionalists opposed it. But it continued to make headway. It had accomplices in the army, in the police, even in Dublin Castle. One small event that occurred in 1861 showed the progress it had made. Cardinal Cullen had refused to allow the coffin of Terence MacManus, one of the revolutionary leaders, to be placed in church; 50,000 men followed it to the graveside in Dublin. On the conclusion of the American Civil War a number of soldiers and officers came to offer their services to the Irish rebels. Matters seemed to be coming to a head. As in 1848, the Government forestalled the conspirators, and on September 16, 1865, threw the Fenian leaders into prison, and seized their papers, together with their organ, *The Irish People*. But the ground was mined underneath the Government's feet. The Fenians had accomplices everywhere. Stephens made his escape and left the country. In face of the unknown danger, resolution began to weaken. The Government became troubled. Martial law was proclaimed. Scattered risings took place, which were of course, easily put down. An American ship, the *Erin's Hope*, arrived with a cargo of arms and a body of soldiers on

board. Both men and arms were captured. For three years the country continued in a state of tragi-comic terror of Fenians. In England Clerkenwell prison was blown up by dynamite, and some inoffending people in the neighbourhood were killed. A raid upon Chester Castle proved a failure. At Manchester the Fenians stopped the " Black Maria " in which two of their brethren were being carried off. Sergeant Brett, the officer in command of the van, had his brains blown out while they were attempting to force the lock of the van. For this five men were arrested. The Press and public opinion of England cried out for vengeance. They were given a trial in which resentment played quite as large a part as the desire for justice. Justice and resentment were alike satisfied by the triple execution of those whom the Irish still call the " Manchester Martyrs."

Some criminal follies ; a few scattered and unfortunate attempts at crime, that were severely repressed—is that, some one will ask, the whole of Fenianism ? The judgment is natural. Yet this poor programme proved sufficient to change the whole course of events in Ireland, for it made men afraid. England had been living in contented optimism, when " like a thunderclap in a clear sky," [3] Fenianism broke out. The alarm aroused public opinion and frightened the English. Men began to understand the profound misery in which Ireland was sunk, and the necessity for repairing the wrongs of the past. The Act of 1867 had just then sent to Parliament a body of members chosen on a wider and more democratic franchise. Almost immediately afterwards Gladstone secured the passing of the Bill for the " Disestablishment " of the Anglican Church in Ireland, and the first Land Act (1869-1870). To all appearances Fenianism had been a miserable fiasco. In reality it had succeeded where O'Connell and Young Ireland had failed. It had opened a new era in the history of Ireland. The period of concessions and reforms had at last arrived.

3 John Stuart Mill, *England and Ireland.*

V.—Parnell.[1]

But reforms were not to be won quickly or easily. From 1874 to 1880 a Conservative ministry was in power, and Parliament refused every request made by Irishmen one after the other. Meantime, public opinion in Ireland was developing. In 1870 an association had been formed to demand Home Government, or, as it was soon afterwards styled, Home Rule—a sort of compromise between Repeal (that is to say, independence) and the Union. It was a sign of the times that all parties were represented in it, even the Orangemen and the Protestants, who constituted the English garrison. The latter were influenced not so much by belief in the new idea as by hatred of Gladstone's policy. They soon abandoned the movement, just as they had done in O'Connell's time in the early days of Repeal. Whiggery, on the other hand, which, thanks to the support of the clergy, had hitherto been the dominant policy, now rapidly declined. The survivors and successors of Repeal and of Young Ireland were now formed into an independent party, the "Nationalist" party, which was in alliance with the English Radicals. Its progress was rapid. In 1874, under the leadership of Isaac Butt, a man of great ability but weak

[1] It is impossible to mention even the important works that have been published about the period between 1870 and 1893, and especially about Parnell. One of the best is the masterly study of Parnell by M. Augustin Filon in *Profils Anglais*, Paris, 1893. *Cf.* T. P. O Connor, *The Parnell Movement*, London, 1886. R. Barry O'Brien, *Life of C. S. Parnell*, London, 1898. M. Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, London and New York, 1904 (see p. 651, *et seq.*—a powerful portrait of Parnell.) George Moore, *Parnell and His Island*, London, 1887. *Parnellism and Crime, Reprinted from the Times*, London, 1887. *Diary of the Parnell Commission*, London, 1887. Le Caron, 25 *Years in the Secret Service*, London, 1892. *Ireland under Coercion. The Diary of an American*, by Hurlbert, Edinburgh, 1888. Baron de Mandat-Grancey, *Chez Paddy*, Paris, 1887. *Pour l'Irlande*; *Reponse à Chez Paddy*, by E. Piche, a Canadian priest, Paris. Ph. Daryl, *les Anglais en Irlande*, Paris, 1887. Charles Russell (Lord Russell of Killowen), *New Views on Ireland*, London, 1880. William O'Brien, *Recollections*, London, 1905. *Cf.* The *Annual Register* and the numerous publications of the *Irish Unionist Alliance*, the *Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union*, the *Irish Press Agency*, etc.

character, it obtained for the first time a majority at the General Election in Ireland. In 1878 it found a leader of supreme ability in the person of Charles Stewart Parnell.

Parnell shares with O'Connell the glory of being the greatest of Irish leaders. Like O'Connell, he was a landlord, and his family traditions were those of an aristocrat. Like him, too, he was overbearing, even despotic in temperament. But in all else Parnell was the very opposite of the "Liberator." The Protestant leader of a Catholic people, he won popularity in Ireland, without being at all times either understood or personally liked. In outward appearance he had nothing of the Irishman, nothing of the "Celt," about him. He was cold, distant and unexpansive in manner, and had more followers than friends.[2] His speech was not that of a great orator. Yet it was singularly powerful and penetrating, with here and there brilliant flashes that showed profound wisdom. A man of few words, of strength rather than breadth of mind—his political ideals were often uncertain and confused—he was better fitted to be a combatant than a constructive politician. Beyond all else, he was a Parliamentary fighter of extraordinary ability, perfectly self-controlled, cold and bitter, powerful at hitting back. It was precisely these English qualities that enabled him to attain such remarkable success in his struggle with the English. Pride was perhaps a stronger motive with him than patriotism or faith. After the Divorce Case, when a temporary retirement might have saved him and saved

[2] "This was, perhaps, the Parnell that strangers saw," said one, who had known him intimately, to the writer. "But at bottom, with his intimates, no one was more warm-hearted, more full of grace and charm . . . To those near him, he showed a simple cordiality. He inherited from his mother many Celtic traits of character. He is called proud, but he showed sufficient patriotism to leave his caste and espouse the popular cause at a time when his pride had nothing to gain from so doing. His love of Ireland was equalled by his hatred of English Rule in Ireland, a hatred like the *saeva indignatio* of Swift. In Parliament his oratory was as fiery in substance, as it was restrained in form. You did not know him until you saw the flame that seemed to leap out of each of his words; he held friends and enemies breathlessly in thrall, by the mastery of his vengeful utterance."

Home Rule, he refused to take this course. The concession would have hurt his pride too much, and the same self-centred obstinacy that had so often led him to victory in the end proved the cause of his destruction.

Until he turned traitor to his good fortune, Parnell was exceptionally favoured by circumstances. He had to deal with an England still stirred by Fenianism and disposed to conciliation. He received from the aged Biggar the weapon of Parliamentary obstruction. He took out of the timid hands of Isaac Butt a united and disciplined party. The two most striking points in "Parnellism" were, indeed, suggested to Parnell himself by Michael Davitt in 1879. First Davitt proposed that he should yoke the political question to the Land Question, so that the Home Rule cause might benefit by the strength of agrarian agitation. It was a happy opportunism. He next suggested that in his constitutional struggle Parnell should tacitly, without any formal compact, accept the aid of the more moderate members of the Revolutionary Party, those Irish and, more especially, American extremists, whose co-operation in the agrarian battle Davitt and Devoy had lately secured.[3]

Hitherto Constitutionalists and Revolutionaries had ever been at daggers drawn. Henceforward the two movements were to advance along parallel lines, and victory would be assured. The step was certainly a dangerous one. No doubt Constitutionalism would derive new force from the assistance of the Clan-na-Gael, and from contributions of American money. But, on the other hand, it must naturally be more or less compromised. Constitutionalists would be charged with complicity in crime, and were bound to lose their power of preventing outrages. Nevertheless Parnell acquiesced in the new plans, and from that moment began the famous and terrible crisis of the years 1880 to 1893, that great revolution in which the Irish nation came

3 See Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism*, p. 116 *et seq.* for the history of the *New Departure*.

within an ace of winning the day, and from which it was destined to come forth sadly maimed, yet still living.

In reality there were two successive crises, which followed the same evolution, and exhibit the strangest similarities. The first began in 1879. The country was then threatened by famine, as a result of three bad harvests. On top of them came an eviction campaign. The situation was grave. It was a matter of life and death for the country. Were the defenceless people again to perish resignedly, crushed between the famine and the landlords, as had happened in 1847? But this time they were armed for the contest. Parnell and Davitt had just founded the Land League to maintain the struggle against landlordism. In 1880 the House of Lords rejected a Bill, of a character favourable to the tenants, which was the first attempt to deal with the situation. The Land League branches which were in the hands of the more violent spirits retaliated by boycotting and resistance at evictions. The Moonlighters spread crime and terror throughout the country. This was the result of the evictions, the fatal accompaniment of excess in agrarian agitation. As a consequence, Gladstone hastened to pass at the same time as the Land Act of 1881 (which the Irish members committed the error of opposing) a severe Coercion Act, which Forster, the Chief Secretary, put into operation with fatal brutality. Instead of aiming at the real criminals, he attacked the constitutional organisation, the Land League. He tried to put down all agitation. The League was suppressed, but its place was filled by the Ladies' Land League. Six or seven hundred persons were thrown into gaol, and Parnell himself was arrested. His lieutenants then published their celebrated No-Rent Manifesto, which came too late, and failed. The Moonlighters and Ribbonmen committed more outrages; the landlords carried out more evictions than ever. Crime increased, and anarchy increased with it. Coercion had been directed against the constitutional agitation. The result

was that it had left the field open for anarchy. At last the English were stirred. In the month of April, 1882, after two years of social and agrarian strife,—the heroic period of Parnellism—Gladstone put forward terms of peace, and entered into negotiations with Parnell, who was then imprisoned in Kilmainham. This "Kilmainham Treaty," though condemned by the more advanced spirits in the Land League as being a compromise, was in reality a triumph for Parnell and the moderate party. It marked the definite failure of coercion, and meant certain victory for the Irish. Parnell was proclaimed the "uncrowned king" of Ireland, and Gladstone and the English Liberals became subservient to him. But his triumph was short-lived. The tragic murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the messenger of conciliation, and Mr. Under-Secretary Burke by the "Invincibles," in the Phœnix Park brought it to an abrupt conclusion. Parnell had accepted the aid of those extremists, who were prepared to co-operate in an agitation more or less within the law. But there remained the other section of extremists, who were opposed to such co-operation, and these had now come upon the scene to disturb the feast. Dublin, and the whole of Ireland, was filled with terror and alarm. Parnell made up his mind to keep clear of agitation by violent methods ever afterwards; and such was the horror caused by the Park Murders, that from that day forward the graver forms of crime disappeared from Ireland.[4] Constitutional agitation had received a blow from which it only slowly revived. Only under the rough coercion of Lord Spencer, and the wholesale evictions that accompanied it, did it again show signs of life.

The Land League was revived as the National League, on lines at once more moderate, more parliamentary, and more under the control of the clergy. In Ulster a civil

4 The dynamitards devoted their efforts to terrorising England, from 1882 to 1885; but in Ireland organised crime on any large scale disappeared.

war broke out between Nationalists and Orangemen. It took two years to put down the agitation. How the crisis ended is well known. In 1885-6 Liberal and Conservative ministries were each twice in power; Mr. Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill, together with a general Land Purchase Act. But it was summarily rejected by the House of Commons in 1886.

The second crisis, which lasted from 1886 to 1893, was happily of a less tragic character than the earlier one. In its main lines it passed through the same phases. First came a crisis in agriculture, a sudden fall in prices, which made the payment of rent an impossibility. In September, 1886, Parliament threw out a Bill which Parnell had introduced to afford temporary relief. At the same time the landlords inaugurated a new eviction campaign, in which they called in the aid of the troops. The peasants looked around for someone who should fight their battle. It was in these circumstances that Parnell's lieutenants started the famous "Plan of Campaign," a second and improved edition of the No-Rent Manifesto of 1881. Parnell and the League took no official part in the agitation, but furnished the funds for it. Matters grew worse on both sides. The Unionist Government gave itself up to a policy of re-action. In 1887 Mr. Balfour secured the passing of a Land Bill that partially satisfied the tenants' demand, but passed at the same time a new Crimes Act of a permanent character. He also enforced rigorous coercion, of so severe a character, that its only result was to stir up the Nationalists to further efforts, while it won for them the sympathy of English Radicals. For three years the agrarian and political struggle continued. In some points [5] the "Plan of Campaign" proved a failure, but

5 For example, on the property of Mr. Smith Barry, at Tipperary, whose tenants were unfortunately allowed to be evicted, the idea being to build a "New Tipperary" for them. Many mistakes were committed in the choice of points of attack in the "Plan of Campaign," and in the conduct of operations in the land war. They might, perhaps, have been avoided, had Parnell not desired to keep aloof, and to restrain the League from any official participation in the operations.

it succeeded in 95 cases out of 110. At this time Parnell was in England, defending himself against an attempt made by the Tories to bring about his political ruin. The *Times*, in its famous series of articles on *Parnellism and Crime*, accused him of direct complicity in the crimes of the "Invincibles," and supported the charge by forged letters. A Special Commission, composed of his political enemies, was appointed to try him, but after long months of inquiry the bottom was knocked out of the accusation by the confession of the forger Pigott. Notwithstanding the strictures passed upon Parnell in the Report of the Commission, the Irish Leader suddenly became a popular hero in England. He entered into a still closer alliance with Gladstone. The two discussed the provisions of the coming Home Rule Bill at Hawarden. The "Union of Hearts" between Ireland and Liberal England was an accomplished fact, and once more the victory of the Irish seemed assured. But it was not to be. Like a thunderclap came the Divorce Case, and Irish hopes and the Irish leader were involved in the same ruin. . . . What followed is known to all. The Irish leader was repudiated by the Liberal Party in England, but refused to quit his post. The Irish themselves, after the futile Boulogne negotiations, abandoned Parnell, who died, worn out, a few months later; and the Parnellites, who were only a minority in the Parliamentary Party, also found themselves deserted. For ten years dissension reigned supreme in Ireland. In England Gladstone returned to power, and passed his Home Rule Bill through the Commons in 1893. It was at once thrown out by the Lords. In the result, by the crisis of 1880 to 1893, the Irish gained a code of legislation favourable to the farmers, and also succeeded in establishing the principle of land purchase, which was later to bear fruit. Had Parnell remained at the helm, had Gladstone been a younger man, it is not difficult to believe that they might likewise have won Home Rule. From 1895 to 1905 the Conservative Government, indeed,

devoted themselves to "killing Home Rule by kindness,"[6] by means of a policy of cheap concessions judiciously mingled with coercion. These efforts, however, did not succeed either in conciliating Ireland, or in bringing back union to the Disunited Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

VI.

Let us now look backwards and try to appreciate the why and wherefore of the long and mournful story of Ireland.

Ireland being a small country, situate close to a large one, a conflict was inevitable. One of the two must infallibly conquer the other. Compared with her neighbour, Ireland was poor and weak. She was cut off by England from the life of Europe. Her people were idealistic, unstable, sentimental. It was their unhappy destiny to have to submit to the imperious and selfish rule of the Saxon. They have all along refused to bend to the yoke. Why, then, some may ask with Froude,[1] if they had not the strength to conquer, did they not "honourably" submit, a course which would have been in their real interest. Was national pride or race antipathy the cause? It may be answered at once that they were not. Had Ireland desired to submit, she could not have done so. England did not leave her the choice. Risings, revolutions, and civil wars were forced upon the country from century to century. They were provoked by massacres, plantations, and persecutions; by the oppressions of landlords, by the injustice of the laws. It was England herself, it was the English in Ireland that made the Irish rebels. But how comes it, one may ask, that after so long an agony Ireland still survives, that the name of her people has not been obliterated

6 Killing Home Rule with kindness was the policy of Mr. Arthur Balfour after 1890, and of his brother, Mr. Gerald Balfour, *Chief Secretary*, from 1895 to 1900. To a certain extent, it was also that of Mr. George Wyndham, Chief Secretary, from 1900 to 1905. (*Cf.* our article on *Ireland and British Imperialism* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of the 15th May, 1903).

1 *The English in Ireland*, I., 6, 12.

from the pages of history ? The reason is that down to the eighteenth century, so vigorous was her race, so powerful the influence of her climate and of her pleasant nature, so great the charm of her soul [2] on the souls of the new-comers, that Ireland always assimilated her invaders. "Lord ! " said the poet Spenser, "how quickely doth that countrey alter mens' natures." England, on the other hand, was lacking in the first duty of a conqueror, which is to legitimise his conquest by the spread of civilisation, and by works of reparation. This is a truth that none can fail to recognise. "Seven centuries of rapine and violence. Carelessness alternating with ferocity. Not a gleam of humanity, nor of political wisdom. Not even the wisdom of the peasant, who takes care of his beast, lest it perish." [3] Why, then, such long-continued barbarity, one may ask, since not even Cromwell himself sought the complete extermination of the Irish ? Why was no honest effort ever made to conciliate the Irish down to the time of the Union, save, perhaps, that of Henry VIII. ? Why were tyranny, bloodshed, and persecution, whether by legal methods or by methods of violence, the only policy attempted ; and since the Union, why has there been so much bad grace, and so little good faith in dealing with Irish grievances ? Why is it that those concessions that have been made since 1870 were won only by violent methods, and even then hampered by limitations which robbed them of all merit, if not of all value ? Filled with ambition, and born to rule, the English, from the moment they set foot in Ireland, feeling themselves stronger than the rival nation, forthwith neglected and despised it, as a property that must some day fall in to them. They contented themselves with putting a stop to all progress in the country, leaving Ireland "to stew in her own juice," as an Englishman has put it. They founded their rule upon Irish dissensions, instead of promoting

2 Aug. Filon, *Profils Anglais*, Paris, 1893, Chapter on John Morley.
3 John M. Robertson (now M.P.), *The Saxon and the Celt*, London, 1897, p. 313.

goodwill and equal justice. Instead of devoting themselves to organisation and to the development of the country, they abandoned its whole government to a garrison of unscrupulous adventurers. Self-interest, rather than fanaticism, was the motive which inspired those Penal Laws, as to which Hallam, the historian, has declared that "to have exterminated the Catholics by the sword or expelled them like the Moriscos of Spain would have been a little more repugnant to Justice and Humanity, but incomparably more politic." Either herself, or in the person of her representatives, England exploited Ireland as a dependency, a conquered country, from which nothing need be feared, from which nothing could be hoped; a country that was done for, that could never revive, and towards which the best policy to pursue was to draw from it as large a tribute as possible, of men for the army, and of money for the Empire. Thus, when all is said, the Irish policy of England may, perhaps, be found to be inspired not so much by hatred or vindictiveness, as by selfish indifference, narrowness of view, and imperfect understanding. But is this the whole explanation? Can we not push the matter a stage further? When we look at the sequence of events since the Great Famine; when we recognise that England has always shrunk from taking any definite or decisive step in Ireland; that she has toyed with problems without seriously seeking to solve them; that she has ever been satisfied to exploit the sister island intellectually and economically, can we go on to say that at bottom the English (Gladstone and his followers always excepted) have been influenced by the idea of merely marking time till the sorely-stricken nation might sink into dissolution; that they are waiting till, when Ireland is drained of her ancient inhabitants—some lost by emigration, others by Anglicisation—the Irish question will, in measurable time, disappear of its own accord? The solution of this question we leave to the reader, who, having read the introduction to this book, has the patience to read the book.

PART I.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS[1]

CHAPTER I.—THE TWO IRELANDS: THE ENGLISH COLONY

HISTORY, as we have seen, has created two Irelands in Ireland. These exist, indeed, two opposed nations, the one super-imposed on the other, the one subject, the other master. Above is the British colony or garrison—that is to say, the newcomers, the latest planters in Ireland, the feudatories of England, the privileged class, the outlanders of Ireland, or the English in Ireland, as

[1] For this first part see especially besides the important works of G. de Beaumont and Cardinal Perraud already quoted :—

Political and Social works.—Ph . Daryl, *The English in Ireland*, Paris, 1887. De Mandat-Grancey, *Chez Paddy*, Paris, 1887. E. Piché, *Pour l'Irlande* (answer to *Chez Paddy*), Paris, Merich. George Sigerson, *Modern Ireland*, London, 1868. John Mitchel, *Jail Journal*, New York, 1854. M. Arnold, *Irish Essays*, London, 1882. R. Barry O'Brien, *Fifty Years' Concessions to Ireland*, London, 1883. By the same, *Irish Wrongs and English Remedies*, London, 1887. William O'Brien, *Irish Ideas*, London, 1893. M. Davitt, *Leaves from a Prison Diary*, London, 1885. *The Case of the Irish Landlords, by one of them*, Dublin, 1899. T. W. Russell, *Ireland and the Empire*, London, 1901. O'Connor Morris, *Present Irish Questions*, London, 1901. *Ideals in Ireland*, edited by Lady Gregory, London, 1901. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., *To-day and To-morrow in Ireland*, London and Dublin, 1903. Sir H. Plunkett, *Ireland in the New Century*, London, 1904. M. Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, London, New York, 1904. Recollections, Lives and Correspondence of O'Connell, of Dr. M'Hale (Archbishop of Tuam), of Dr. Doyle (Archbishop of Kildare and Leighlin), of T. Drummond, of

Froude, who wrote their history under this title, called them. Below are the people, the conquered, the helots, the confused and mingled mass of the former occupants of the soil, be they of Gaelic or Danish, of Norman or Anglo-Norman, or even of English blood. For division does not really arise from race differences—races are merged and mixed—nor even from religious differences—Protestants may be found in the popular party, and Catholics in the English party. The line of demarcation is chiefly social and political. Interests, prejudices, national aspirations, separate the two Irelands far more than do race or religion. Thus it would not seem that the breach which history has created is definitive and impassable. The two sections are without doubt mutually hostile; shall we say that they are irreducible and refractory, one to the other, by their very definition? Are they, as has been said, like oil and water, or like mercury and lead? England, without doubt, has done everything, and still does everything, to separate the two nations. She excites the prejudices of the one and the appetites of the other, knowing well that her strength lies in their division, and that her power would be in danger were Ireland one and united. But in former days did not Ireland always conquer her conquerors one after the other? How then can she, after two centuries of prescription have run in their favour, refuse the name of

Davis, of John Mitchel, of C. G. Duffy, of J. B. Dillon, of Parnell, etc. William O'Brien, M.P., *Recollections*, London, 1905.

Various Periodicals and Publications.—*Hansard*. *New Ireland Review*, Dublin. *Journal of the National Literary Society*, Dublin. Publications of the Irish Press Agency, of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, of the Irish Unionist Alliance, of the United Irish League of Great Britain.

Novels.—The Novels of Miss Edgeworth, of C. Lever, of S. Lover, of Carleton, Gerald Griffin, of Ch. Kickham. William O'Brien, *When we were Boys*. Mrs. O'Brien, *Silhouettes Irlandaises*, The Novels of Canon Sheehan, especially *My New Curate*. The Novels of Jane Barlow, espially *Irish Idylls* and *A Creel of Irish Stories*; of Miss Lawless, especially *Hurrish*; of Mrs. Tynan-Hickson, notably *A Cluster of Nuts*; of Miss Julia Crottie, notably *Neighbours*. Those of Seumas M'Manus, notably *In Old Donegal*; and of Shan Bullock, especially *The Barrys*, and *Dan the Dollar*. O'Gara, *The Green Republic*, London, 1903. George Moore, *The Untilled Field*, 1903. George Birmingham, *The Seething Pot*, London, 1905.

Irishmen to those landlords whose titles to their property she no longer disputes? How can she disown those men who since the time of Cromwell and of William III. have breathed her air beneath her skies, and who, whatever may have been their faults towards the country of their adoption, gave to her in her hours of tragedy a Wolfe Tone and a Robert Emmet, a Smith O'Brien and a John Mitchel?

The history of Ireland in the nineteenth century is that of a great and slow revolution, at once political and social, by which the English Garrison, the sovereign minority, tends to lose its privileges and to return to the ranks, while the majority, the subject people, gradually free themselves and resume their natural rights. The progressive uprising of the Irish people, the simultaneous downfall of the governing classes, is one of the great social facts of contemporary Ireland. Equilibrium is not yet attained, but the arms of the balance tend to come to rest.

The British Colony or Garrison consists of two parts. First, there is the English oligarchy, the Ascendancy, so called, the landlords. These trace their descent from the English conquerors planted in the country by England after wholesale confiscations. They have their creatures, agents and middlemen, who live upon them. To this group also belongs a section of the bourgeoisie of the towns—officials, lawyers, professors, business men, or manufacturers—who have been imported by England, or who have become her supporters. Secondly, there are the Presbyterians of Ulster, the descendants or successors of the Scotch colonists in the north-east corner of the island. They are the Scots of Ireland, as distinguished from their allies, the Ascendancy, who are the English of Ireland. Together the two comprise the total forces of the Garrison, the Unionist and "loyal" minority of the day. They comprise a million and a quarter of the inhabitants of Ireland, that is to say, a little over a quarter of Ireland's total population of four and a half millions.

I.—The Oligarchy.

Throughout the eighteenth century and for a part of the nineteenth the Anglo-Saxon and Protestant Oligarchy remained masters of Celtic and Catholic Ireland. Government, offices, riches, were all in their hands. Their Church was the State Church, and was wealthy with the plunder of the Church of Rome. The Catholics were ignored by the law except for the purposes of "repression and punishment."[2] The oligarchy might have developed and civilised the country, but their only thought was to exploit and oppress it. Their instruments of oppression were the Penal Laws, which made pariahs of the "Papists," and condemned them to ignorance, corruption and misery. Landlordism was their method of exploitation. The whole peasantry was held in the bonds of this new type of feudalism by something stronger than custom or law, the fact, namely, that the land was, in the absence of all other industries, their sole means of livelihood. Not only were they forced to pay exorbitant rents, but the landlord made demands upon them that implied slavery, and in return they received no service and no assurance of protection. It is true that this system was to degrade and demoralise the ruling class itself. Abuses were engendered in the church as in the Government, in private as in public life; and the squireen was the scandal and the terror of his neighbourhood. But times changed. While Parliament was still an aristocratic assembly the Irish oligarchy had nothing to fear from the Irish Catholic masses, who, although they had become electors in 1829, exercised no power in the Commons. But the change came in 1865, and more markedly in 1884, when the franchise was largely extended to the democracy. From the day that saw every workman's and peasant's house, every "hearth," invested with the vote, the fate of the Garrison was decided. Irish feudalism received its death-

[2] Lecky's *History of England in the 18th Century*, I. 284.

warrant. In 1869 the Irish Episcopal Church was disestablished. In 1870 and in 1881 semi-revolutionary Land Acts put a curb upon landlordism and lowered the status of the landlord to its fit level; then followed a period in which voluntary sale and purchase of land was encouraged by legislation. In 1898 the Ascendancy lost control of local government, which became elective, and therefore democratic.

Thus had the English Garrison during the course of the nineteenth century seen their privileges gradually vanish away. It is true that what they have lost by legislation on the one hand they have often been able to retake on the other. Up to a certain point they have been able to maintain their yoke as much by the ascendancy which they had gained over the people, as by the spirit of servitude which they had impressed on the national mind. The greater part of the landed property is still in their hands, and they dominate the business world and the liberal professions. They are still the rich class, although their wealth has been largely dissipated by the follies of the past. Their parliamentary influence is very limited, for outside Ulster they hold in the House of Commons only the two seats of Trinity College.[3] But the Irish representation in the House of Lords is completely Unionist.[4] The Garrison no longer make the laws, but they apply them, for it is they who control the greater part of the public functions in the State. They dominate the judicial bench, and are all but absolute among the members of the Bar; and they have Trinity College for the education of their sons. They constitute "society," the "respectable classes"; are the exclusive entourage of the Lord Lieutenant, and exercise a preponderant

3 Since this has been written the Unionists have won back a seat in South Dublin; on the other hand, they have lost one in Belfast.

4 The Irish peerage numbers 174 members. The Irish peers select 28 from among themselves for life seats in the House of Lords. At the same time a certain number of Irish peers have seats in the Upper House as members of the peerage of the United Kingdom. (*Cf.* Comte, de Franqueville, *Le Gouvernement et le Parlement Britanniques*, II., 154-157). Of the 174 Irish peers only 14 are Catholics.

influence on the Government in Dublin Castle, which is still penetrated with their spirit and their prejudices.

In the country districts the social power of the landlords is still very great. This is apparent when one considers that even a small landlord has about a hundred tenants on his property, while the large holders have several thousand. Moreover, even in cases where the tenants have purchased the land the landlords with their demesnes reserved to them, and lands which they personally manage, will still remain the greatest proprietors in the country. In their districts they are the centre of established authority. They are the Justices of the Peace. The police are at their disposition. The Rector, the Inspector of Police, the Resident Magistrate (when there is one) are their familiars, if not their creatures. Through their agents and stewards, their bailiffs, receivers, and process-servers, they keep the peasant under a yoke of intimidation, espionage, and corruption. Although for a century and more the Catholics have had the right of acquiring land, even to-day nine out of ten landlords will be found to be Protestant. Here and there, indeed, we find a few old Catholic families of Anglo-Norman origin, such as the Fingalls, and even a few descendants of the ancient Celtic chiefs, such as the O'Conors of Connacht, who have been able to preserve their lands throughout the persecutions, thanks sometimes to the fair conscience of Protestant relations and friends. Yet though they have often adopted the most extreme prejudices of the class to which they have attached themselves, there is no Catholic on the list of the twenty-eight peers who represent Ireland in the House of Lords. Catholicism is a badge of inferiority, and to the landlords, as to the bourgeoisie, the Catholic always seems somewhat of an intruder in the Ascendancy ranks.

Clearly, then, the Protestant Ascendancy is not yet dead in Ireland. Custom, acquired rights, Government support, conspire to preserve it; but none the less the days of the privileged class are numbered. The worm-

eaten edifice has more than half crumbled to pieces already. You may see as you go through the country many a mansion shut up or falling into ruins that was but a little while ago a bustling centre of life and luxury. They stand there as the last witnesses of the fêtes and follies of the past. Within, perhaps, the present landlord drags out a miserable and desolate existence, like some old half-pay officer. He has no relations with the people, and no hopes of improvement, but he continues bound by the chain forged by his ancestors or by himself in the days of splendour, the chain of poverty.[5] Can one refuse pity to these "disinherited" magnates who are paying for mistakes which may not have been their own? No one in Ireland any longer defends the "Garrison" as an institution, and when they are gone no one will regret them. Even in England, except in the Upper House and among the Tories, there is no pity or sympathy for this class, which, nevertheless, has given the Empire some of its greatest sons, from a Napier and a Wellesley to a Dufferin and a Lord Roberts. Their part is played, there is nothing left for them to do. Have they not failed in the task which was confided to them, and shown themselves powerless either to Anglicise or to Protestantise Ireland? The young Radical democracy laughs at this fallen Garrison, which is already three-parts disarmed; while the glorious old aristocracy of England is at no pains to hide a certain disdain for this Anglo-Irish nobility, which, according to the well-known saying, has nothing old except its prejudices, and nothing new except its parchments, and whose titles, according to Lecky, the historian, are for the most part connected "with memories not of honour but of shame."[6]

It seems somewhat unjust that modern England, and

5 Mr. Filson Young in *Ireland at the Cross Roads* gives a clever picture of the sadness of life among the Irish landlords.

6 An allusion to the titles sold in 1799-1800 in exchange for votes in favour of the Act of Union, and more generally to the fact that England has never honoured Irishmen with titles unless they were supporters of England's cause.

notably since the time of the Great Famine, should thus denounce those who were her representatives in Ireland, and, to clear herself, should throw upon them all responsibility for all the mistakes of the past. It is easy to say that all the evils of Ireland have for sole cause a bad aristocracy.[7] But who created this aristocracy? Human nature is much the same everywhere, and there is no class or nation but numbers within it certain unworthy or perverse individuals. The Irish oligarchy must not be charged with suffering from a double dose of original sin—a condemnation which some English critics would extend to the whole Irish nation. The truth is that England, who wishes now to make scapegoats of the Irish landlords, is responsible for the oligarchy. They are the product of circumstances; for it was England that gave over a Celtic and Catholic country to these English Protestants, invested them with unlimited privileges, but imposed no duties upon them, and placed them altogether above the law. They became the irresponsible agents of the mother-country, and had nothing either to fear or to hope from the people who had been given to them to be their slaves. There has never been an occasion on which the governors and governed appeared likely to unite but England intervened and threw amidst the combatants a money bribe, or raised the cry of religious war.[8] By coercion the British Government has always upheld the worst excesses of the worst landlords. In the middle of the last century it permitted that great social crime, the Clearances, to take place, and did not dare to legislate for the protection of the peasants until 1870. In a word, those circumstances which drew out all the best qualities of the English aristocracy, and produced its best effects, only resulted in Ireland in encouraging vices and abuses on the part of the English Garrison.

7 Gustave de Beaumont, *op. cit.* I, 211.

8 For example:—in 1795 England embittered the religious war: in 1898, to win back the landlords who were making common cause with the people on the Financial Relations Question, the Government, by the Local Government Act, gave them a present of the poor rate.

These, it must be said, were unspeakably odious. No doubt there have been, and still are, good landlords who are paying to-day for the sins of their fellows ; but there are in truth too many of the other kind. In the full daylight of the nineteenth century we still meet a Lord Plunket, an Anglican bishop, who evicts his Catholic tenants because they refuse to have their children educated in Protestant schools ; a Lord Leitrim, who violates the daughters of his tenants ; a Lord Clanricarde, whose exactions scandalise even the *Times*, and are described by the noble lord's own counsel as " devil's work."[9] It was of such as these that Lord Dufferin once said : " There are men possessing property in Ireland in whose honour, in whose sense of justice, in whose compassion, I for one, my lords, have no confidence whatever."[10] Generally speaking, the landlords appreciated only the rights of property which they themselves had created by law, and not the rights of humanity. " The Irish landlords," said Froude, the Celtophobe historian, " in their dealings with the tenants, have been little better than skilful thieves." In thirty-three years, from 1849 to 1882, they evicted and drove from their homes 363,000 peasant families,[11] and this at a time when, according to Gladstone, eviction meant a sentence of death. They have never tried to develop the country, or to fulfil their social function as a civilising agency. The Garrison have occupied the country without governing it, or rather, they have governed it only in the interests of class : ascendancy has been their whole politics. It is sad to think of how much they might have done for Ireland had they wished. Many Irishmen—with the Volunteers of 1782, with the United Irishmen, with

9 See *Cardinal Perraud, op. cit.* 1-303 and *seq.* T. P. O'Connor, *Parnell Movement*, London, 1886., Ch. VI. and Ch. XV. William O'Brien, *Irish Ideas*, London, 1893, p. 83.

10 Lord Dufferin in the House of Lords (February, 1854), during the Second Reading of Lord Donoughmore's Bill in favour of the Irish peasantry.

11 Mulhall, *Dictionary of Statistics*, London, 1886. p. 175. (We are not counting 119,000 evicted families who were reinstated sooner or ater).

O'Connell, Thomas Davis and Young Ireland, and later still, with Butt himself—have cherished the dream of seeing the gentry unite with the people, and play the part of a national aristocracy.[12] Many opportunities have been lost never to be found again. On every occasion they turned from the path of conciliation and of progress to safeguard their privileges and their interests. Rather than make a moral conquest of the country of which they might have become the leaders, they have preferred to remain strangers and suspects, the mercenaries of England, and the parasites of Ireland. A Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a Smith O'Brien, because they embraced the cause of the people, are disowned by their families.[13] In 1800, rather than emancipate the Catholics and make one nation of the two Irelands, they threw themselves into the arms of England and sold the Irish Parliament for gold and parchment. They have never been able to cure themselves of egotistic blindness, or to merge their own interests in the public weal. Even to-day the representatives of the dying Garrison have no idea save how they may sell as dearly as possible what still remains of their rights and privileges. Their last thought is of a bargain to be made. It is a sad ending, especially when compared to that of the old Irish aristocracy, which under Cromwell and William III. remained faithful to its country and to its race, and even to the Stuarts, who betrayed it—which allowed itself to be despoiled and exterminated rather than disown its country or its religion, and lost all but honour.[14] The modern oligarchy is dying without one fine phrase or noble gesture; amid the hatred of some and the contempt of others, but without evoking a single regret or lament. Our old noblesse of the Ancien

[12] Mr. William O'Brien's *Irish Ideas*. See the chapter entitled *The Lost Opportunities of the Irish Gentry*.

[13] Smith O'Brien, for instance, was repudiated by his own brother, Sir Lucius O'Brien, at Westminster in 1848. The family of Lord Edward Fitzgerald refused to accept from Moore a copy of his *Life of Lord Edward*.

[14] See a fine parallel of Mr. Standish O'Grady's in *Ideals in Ireland*, p. 82-83.

Regime knew its way to a better ending on the night of the 4th of August.

If the "Garrison" henceforth ceases to exist as a sovereign caste, it survives as a political party. The oligarchy, the Ascendancy, is merged in Unionism, and there we find again the narrow egoism of its representatives. Politically their numerical weakness makes them supine and inert, and they have no capable men or leaders. They have not even a programme, or rather, they have only a negative programme, opposition to the national aspirations of Ireland; and to this principle they have never been able to add a single constructive or progressive idea. "Now and again," one of them has declared, "an individual tries to broaden the basis of Irish Unionism, and to bring himself into touch with the life of the people; but the nearer he gets to the people the farther he gets from the Irish Unionist leaders."[15] Their propaganda is reduced to this: they excite British Celtophobia under the pretext of enlightening opinion, and denounce Nationalism and the Nationalists with great violence in the English Press. When they are not attacking Home Rule they have no living or active organisation except the syndicate of landlords, the Landowners' Convention.[16] A little ashamed before the world of the name of Irishmen, they boast of being "British citizens," "loyalists," and the only "loyalists" of Ireland. This "loyalism" is, however, conditional and dependent upon the favours of the Government. It is a pocket "loyalism," a surface "loyalism," which consists in fidelity, not to the British Constitution, but to what they consider is due to themselves from the British Constitution. Utilitarian egoism and personal interest have obliterated everything else in their minds, just as in Ulster, that complementary fraction of the British "colony," everything is dominated by sectarian fanaticism.

15 Sir Horace Plunkett's *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 64.

16 A sort of Council of the Landowners in Ireland composed of the most reactionary elements of the landlord party.

II.—Ulster.

In contrast to the Anglican and aristocratic Ascendancy, Presbyterian Ulster is by nature radical and democratic. The reason of this is to be found in its history, and in the individualistic character of its religion.

It was in the reign of James I. that Ulster was first "planted" by a large Scotch contingent. The current of immigration continued of itself during the seventeenth and a part of the eighteenth century. Under William III. and his immediate successors 80,000 Scotch families settled in Ulster.[1] It must not be thought, however, that the lot of the first Presbyterians in Ireland was by any means enviable. The Established Church persecuted them and forced them to pay tithes; public positions and offices were closed to them; their peasantry were oppressed by the great Anglican landlords, and their workmen soon saw their industries destroyed by prohibitory laws. In short, discontent soon made Ulster a prey to secret societies and agrarian crime. A great number of Presbyterians fled to the American colonies, where they helped to stir up insurrection. Then came the American war and the French Revolution. Ulster was the first to rise in the cause of liberty, and to revolt against the Irish Parliament and the Castle, against "rent" and "tithes." Belfast, now the bulwark of Unionism, was then the home of Republicanism. Presbyterians and Catholics united under the flag of "United Ireland," whilst Wolfe Tone attempted to organise rebellion.

But simultaneously with the growth of this democratic force another arose which was to change the face of things, the force of anti-Catholic passion. It was born originally of a mere conflict of interests. As the Presbyterian peasantry began to emigrate from Ulster the Catholics of the neighbouring counties came to take their place—introduced in many cases by the landlord, who wished to

[1] Th. Wyse, *History of the Catholic Association*, I., 280, 387.

arouse a spirit of competition. Hence began a struggle for the land between the Presbyterians and Catholics, and this soon engendered a religious war. The Peep of Day Boys and the Wreckers massacred the Catholics; the Defenders retaliated, and one evening in September, 1795, the Presbyterians, after their victory at the "Diamond," near Armagh, founded the celebrated "Orange" Society, with the avowed aim of driving the Papists from the province, and with the secret support of Government, which has always sought to divide Irishmen. "They call themselves Orangemen and Protestant Boys," said the Protestant Grattan, "they are a banditti of murderers committing massacres in the name of God, and exercising despotic powers in the name of liberty." So the Catholics were exiled by force from Ulster, but one Papist house being left standing in the County of Armagh. Simultaneously the movement for a United Ireland collapsed, and the revolutionary movement, provoked by Ulster in 1792 and disowned by her in 1798, received its death blow. From these origins arose the two characteristic traits of Presbyterian Ulster: Radicalism, which inclines her towards Irish nationalism; fanaticism, which separates her from it. These two traits appear again and again in Ulster history. Every time that radicalism would seem likely to unite Presbyterians and Nationalists, fanaticism stands in the way and makes enemies of those who the day before had worked in alliance.[2] The Union of 1800 definitely rallied Ulster to the support of the English regime as the Scotch Union had rallied Scotland; and for a hundred years Unionism has found its strongest support in Scotch Ireland. Liberal in politics, Ulster went over to Toryism when in 1885 Gladstone became a convert to Home Rule, and during the crisis of 1880 to 1893 fought passionately

2 Notably in 1852, when Gavan Duffy founded, with the aid of the Presbyterians, the League of North and South to uphold the claims of the peasants. A small Bill brought forward by Lord John Russell to prevent Catholic bishops from assuming the title of their dioceses, sufficed to re-light in Ulster the fires of religious passion and to put an end to the land movement, the outcome of which might have been, ten years earlier, the reforms eventually carried by Mr. Gladstone.

against the claim of Ireland to autonomy. She was encouraged in this by the constant incitements not only of her own leaders, but of the great English political chiefs, Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord Salisbury, and Mr. Chamberlain, who did not hesitate to inflame her anti-Nationalism and anti-Catholicism by advising her to resist Home Rule, even by force if necessary. It is by a strange evolution indeed that Ulster, which was rebel a hundred years ago, has now become ultra-Unionist and ultra-Loyalist. The very men who are now ready to fight for the Union are the descendants of the insurgents of 1798. Sometimes they are proud that they have had an ancestor who was hanged for high treason, and often an old uniform of the Volunteers may be found at the bottom of their wardrobes among the family relics.[3] The fact is that a hundred years ago Ulster revolted not so much against England as against the abuses of the Castle, the Established Church, and the Ascendancy. Against these the Union gave them a first guarantee. Their quarrel was with the Irish Parliament, with its narrowness and corruption, and so to-day they protest against the re-establishment, in any form whatsoever, of an Irish Parliament in Dublin.[4] Ulster, moreover, has in one sense won much during the Unionist regime. She has acquired, in striking contrast to the rest of Ireland, industrial prosperity. The English have not failed to make use of this fact as an illustration and a proof that there was no reason why all Ireland, like Ulster, should not have prospered under the British yoke. Indeed, Belfast, as Londonderry in a lesser degree, may be counted amongst the most thriving industrial centres of Great Britain ; with its red-bricked and smoke-blackened

3 There is a certain high official of the Orange Order who delights, it is said, in entertaining his guests after dinner with a recitation of Robert Emmet's Speech from the Dock.

4 It is said that Gladstone could not understand why Ulster did not second his efforts for Home Rule. He could never make out why the revolutionary Ulstermen of 1795 had so altered that, instead of seeing in Home Rule the consummation of the Liberal policy, they saw in it a reversal of that policy.

buildings after the American pattern, its factories and palaces, this workers' city resembles Liverpool or Glasgow rather than an Irish town. Whence, then, comes this industrial prosperity? How is it that, even in the country districts of Ulster, one is struck on entering it from Connaught or Leinster, with the good condition of the houses, the clean and comfortable look of the lime-whitened cottages, the fresh look of the country-side, rich in crops and trees? Protestantism, it is said, has made Ulster successful. Well, we may admit that Protestantism, rightly understood, develops energy and initiative better than Catholicism, wrongly understood. We may recognise, too, that the Scotch character, of which the Ulstermen have a share, is richer in these qualities than the Irish character. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the Ulster peasant has always had the benefit of an agrarian charter, of tenant right, and of this the rest of the Irish peasantry were deprived until 1871; and also that the Unionist province has for a hundred years possessed political liberty under the Government of its choice. This is, after all, the first of the necessary conditions of progress. But the renown of Ulster's prosperity must not be exaggerated. Ulster has lost through emigration in sixty years 34 per cent. of her population, and the decrease has been scarcely less noticeable among the Protestant than among the Catholic section of the population.[5]

It would be a grave error to consider Ulster as a Protestant "bloc." Of the total population of the province, 1,582,826,[6] the Catholics are 44 per cent., or 699,202, the Anglicans or Episcopalians 22 per cent., or 360,373, the Presbyterians 26 per cent., or 425,526, the Methodists 3 per cent., or 47,372. Thus the Protestants together make 51 per cent. of the population, while the Catholics reach the proportion of 44 per cent. The equilibrium is not

5 From 1841 to 1901 Ireland as a whole has lost 45 per cent. of her population.

6 *Census* of 1901. (*General Report*, p. 52).

perfect, but it is nearly so. Geographically, according to the arrangement of the counties, there are great differences in the distribution of the religions. Out of nine counties, three are almost exclusively Catholic (Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan), in three others (Tyrone, Armagh and Fermanagh) Catholics and Protestants are almost equal in number; and in the three eastern counties of Down, Antrim and Derry, and in the cities of Londonderry and Belfast, the Protestants are in the great majority. If we draw an imaginary line from Londonderry to Warrenpoint, that is to say, from Lough Foyle to Carlingford Lough, east of this line we shall find the Ulster which is mostly Protestant, west that which is mostly Catholic.

The social effects of this quasi-equivalence of Catholic and Protestant may be easily divined. First of all it separates the two classes by a barrier that is morally insuperable. Each class lives to itself; there are no mixed marriages; where there are no hard words there are hard looks, and where there are no stones there are spites. The religious aspect always, at least apparently, dominates the political aspect of social questions, although at bottom I believe it would be found that a hostility of interest underlies the religious hostility. To the same causes we must ascribe that special passion or madness called "Ulsteria," which keeps the Protestants of Ulster in its hold, and embitters feeling in quite another way than the "hysteria" with which the Nationalists are reproached —we mean, of course, anti-Catholic fanaticism.

For over a century, with alternatives of storm and calm, it has been ravaging Ulster, laughable in some of its effects and terribly grotesque and odious in others. It is a permanent factor of civil war; it is the first obstacle in the way of material unity; it is at the same time an inexhaustible source of merriment and of mockery. It is the national sport of the Ulsterman, who, being a Celt of Scotch origin, is violent and passionate by nature, has a fault-finding spirit and loves fighting. That he should not love the Papist is intelligible enough, since the

Papist has in the nineteenth century not only regained lands in Ulster, as at the end of the eighteenth, but has acquired political rights, has established his place on Irish soil, and is menacing the hegemony of the "Garrison." Ulster even, during the last half of the last century, was the object of a slow but sure reconquest by southern Ireland. Thirty years ago the Nationalists did not possess a single parliamentary seat in the province, now they have 15 or 16 out of 34. But why should a jealousy that is, above all, political and social assume this religious form? Why should aversion for Catholics extend to aversion for Catholicism? It must be remembered that we are dealing here with Presbyterians (or Low Church Anglicans) who have inherited from their Scotch ancestors a fierce and individualistic type of religion which is impatient of any yoke or barrier interposed between them and the Bible. Such people have no understanding whatever of a Catholicism in which they see only Torquemeda and the butchers,[7] the Madonna and the Christ. They consider themselves as the sole defenders, in a "Papist" isle, of liberty of conscience and the Christian traditions against the obscurantism and despotism of the priest. But are not the Protestants of Ulster in a majority? Precisely. The Protestants of the south, isolated in the midst of the Catholics, are powerless; and only in Ulster can they speak and act in the defence of their so-called "persecuted brethren" who lie under the tyranny of Catholic intolerance in Munster and Connaught.[8] In short, you cannot reason with the Ulsterman. Popery is the enemy. Every child is brought up with the idea that its duty in life will be to purge Ireland of the Papists. *To Hell with the Pope*! This is the popular curse. An Englishman in Portadown hearing a street boy shout the well-known refrain, asked him did he not know that the Pope was after all a very respectable old gentleman who . . . "Maybe," said the boy, "but he has a

7 See the curious testimony in Mr. Filson Young's *Ireland at the Cross Roads*, London, 1903, p. 27 *et seq.*

8 In reality there is very little religious intolerance amongst the Catholics in Ireland. See later.

bad name in Portadown." There is no worse insult than the epithet of Papist, and it is applied right and left. Wellesley, Lord Lieutenant in 1822, having incurred the disfavour of Ulster, was greeted in Belfast with cries of "Down with the Papist." More recently still, despite his famous pamphlet on Vaticanism, Gladstone did not escape a similar reproach, nor did Mr. John Morley.[9]

The home of this fanaticism is the Orange Society, of whose foundation we have spoken above. It was founded under the auspices of the then Duke of York, and has been twice dissolved—notably after a certain enquiry which, in 1835, disclosed its schemes upon the Army, as well as its destructive action upon all social order. It was reconstituted on a new basis in 1845, and is now a redoubtable power in Ulster, although the number of its effective members is much smaller than it was.[10] It is composed of artisans and employees, errand-boys and hooligans, with here and there a farmer or a clergyman of advanced views; and its democratic character causes it to be regarded with a certain disdain by the rich bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, it is courted by the latter and by some of the aristocracy also, who are in search of political honours. Its leaders are "gentlemen" or "noblemen." It has taken its name from its chosen hero, the man who in its eyes personifies Protestantism, William III. (by the irony of history he was one of the most tolerant of men), the conqueror of the Boyne, of "glorious, pious and immortal memory." It has "lodges" throughout Ulster, in Dublin, England, America and the Colonies, and persons are admitted as members only after secret initiation, with many mystifications and ceremonies. At its head there is a "Grand Black Chapter," an "Imperial Grand Master," a "Grand Council" of the Order. The official object is the defence and protection of Protestantism throughout the world. "Orangeism," said the "Grand Master" of

9 It is said that when Edward VII. went to Londonderry a few years ago he was received with cries of "Popish Ned."

10 The number is estimated at 10,000 as compared with 200,000 in 1835.

the "Grand Black Chapter," a short while ago, "is Protestantism in action and in organisation." It strives, in fact, to protect and advance the privileges and interests of Protestantism, and to put back Catholics and Catholicism under a yoke from which the laws should never have let them escape. Orangeism is loyal to the King, but on condition that the King supports the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland—this was the first formula in the Orange Oath, but it is now modified—and that the Government is loyal to the Orangemen. All that it asks is :

> The crown of the causeway in road or in street,
> And the Papishes under my feet.[11]

Every Sunday in Belfast, Orangeism holds its demonstrations in the sacred forum which stretches out at the base of the Custom House steps. Orator follows orator, meeting succeeds meeting ; throughout the long afternoon the Pope is denounced and Popery condemned, Home Rule torn to pieces, and the green flag to tatters, and the day ends in scuffles between "brethren" and quarrels with the police. But in summer the great demonstrations of Orangeism and its imposing functions may best be seen, above all on the anniversaries of the Battle of the Boyne, or on that of the raising of the Siege of Derry. On the 12th of July, the national festival of Ulster, all the shops are shut, and everyone wears an Orange lily in his buttonhole. A monster procession marches through Belfast, as through every town and village of Orange Ulster, ending up at a vast meeting at which the glories of William of Orange and the reverses of James II. are celebrated in song. No one, apparently, asks why Irishmen should grow so passionate over the memory of a battle that was fought more than two centuries ago between a Scotch King and a Dutch prince.[12] Each "lodge" sends its delegation to the procession with banners and drums. On the flags there are various devices : "Diamond Heroes," "True Blues,"

11 Sir Samuel Ferguson, *The Loyal Orangeman.*
12 An epigram of Father Finlay, the eminent Jesuit.

"No Pope." The participants give themselves over to character dances, shouting out their favourite songs : *The Boyne Water*, and *Croppies Lie Down*. The chief part is played by the drummers, the giants of each "lodge," who with bared arms beat their drums with holy fury, their fists running with blood, until the first drum breaks and many more after it, and in the evening they fall half dead in an excess of frenzy.[13]

Unfortunately these demagogic manifestations, with their mixed inspiration of Freemasonry and the Salvation Army, are not sufficient to satisfy Orange fanaticism. It often passes over into action, and the time of the great anniversaries of July and August, in Shankhill Road, Belfast, gives rise to nothing less than pitched battles between Protestant and Catholic. Catholic processions are attacked, and the windows of churches and schools are smashed. Excursion trains are employed for the purpose of making raids upon those Catholic or partly Catholic towns which form the edge of Ulster, Rostrevor, Warrenpoint, and Newry. The Government shuts its eyes when it can, and proceeds weakly when action is absolutely necessary.

There have not been many statesmen who, like Morley and Drummond, have tried to curb effectively this regime of violence, in which an Ulsterman shows all the brutality of a Scotchman with all the excitability of a Celt, and restrains himself the less because he knows that, if he is prosecuted, he will be tried before Orange justices or an Orange jury.

Of the two forces which are thus struggling for mastery in Ulster, sectarian fanaticism and Orange democracy, fanaticism has up to the present always won the day. Will it be always so ? Ulster Radicalism, it is to be noted,

[13] After a day's work it is said that each man must be shut up in a box, otherwise he would go on drumming in his sleep ! One drummer is said to have carried this to such an extent that he killed his wife in his sleep and broke the furniture. See a humorous article in the *United Irishman* (April, 1903). The Battle of Scarva is represented every year on the site of the battle in County Armagh. So likewise is the Battle of the Boyne.

must not be confounded with Irish Nationalism. It has no grudge against the Act of Union, and is animated, not by the national, but by the democratic spirit. Nevertheless, it was able in 1782 and 1852 to bring about a temporary rapprochment between Ulster and the rest of Ireland. Will this alliance of Orange and Green be reproduced in any lasting manner ? Will the glorious times of United Ireland reappear, and the stormy sky be lit up as before by a League of North and South ? The Nationalists are full of confidence that this will be so, and indeed, certain signs, of which we shall have to speak later, would seem to justify the hope.[14] But we must not be too optimistic. The union of all Ireland is possible and probable, but it does not lie in the near future. Fanaticism will one day be killed by radicalism in Ulster, but the struggle is not yet near its end. If it be true that this sectarianism represents essentially an egoistic protest against the fall of Protestantism from its supremacy, and against the political and social ascent of the Catholic majority, it would be vain to hope that it can disappear before that fall is complete and irrevocable, and that ascent made certain and sanctioned by what should be its seal, Irish autonomy. Until then Ulster will remain fanatical and Tory, despite her radicalism, because she will count on the Tories to protect her interests. Tolerance will come to its own when Ulster, renouncing Protestant supremacy in Ireland, and conscious besides of new aspirations, begins to consider herself no longer as an integral fraction of the British Garrison, but as a free fraction of a free Ireland.

III.—The Crisis of Unionism

The peculiarly painful feature of the present situation, as it concerns the " Colony " in its two sections, Presbyterian Ulster and the English Ascendancy, is the long

14 See later. During the last two or three years the Orangemen are somewhat less rabid.

duration of that unfortunate but necessary operation by which the colony is little by little being deprived of its supremacy and monopoly in political and social life, and sees the majority retake its place and rank in the nation. If the revolution had been carried out in the French manner the operation would at least have been more rapidly completed. As it is, it has been accomplished peacefully, but slowly and painfully. Begun at the end of the eighteenth century, it had in truth made little progress before 1869, and since that time the country has resounded incessantly with the complaints of the Garrison. Rather than collaborate in the necessary measures, and accept with good grace the law of democratic evolution, the colony has done nothing better than bemoan its fate, brandish its acquired rights, and impede all reform. The disestablishment of the Anglican Church was confiscation and pure theft. Theft and confiscation, too, were the land laws of Mr. Gladstone ; moreover, they stood for socialism and anarchy. Justice and the whole social order were overthrown, and the power of Britain and Protestantism ruined for ever in Ireland. The Ascendancy posed as victims to the excesses of the Land League, and defenders of the Empire and of British unity against Home Rule ideas. With the growth of Imperialism a breath of intransigeant reaction passed through the Irish Unionists, exalting their hopes and accentuating their pretensions. When after the rejection of Home Rule the Conservative Government thought that it was its duty to enter, though timidly at first, into the path of concession and conciliation, their fury knew no bounds. Was it possible that England could act thus towards her colony, which in 1800 had thrown itself into her arms to preserve its ascendancy ? Was this ascendancy to be now plucked from it piece by piece by England herself, and by a Unionist and Tory Government ? The limit was passed. Hence they began, and for the past ten years have continued, to complain and protest with renewed vigour against the Government.

" We are here at the will of England and in the service

of England. We are flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone. It is her Bible that we read, her Psalms that we sing, her blood that runs in our veins. For centuries we have been her champions in Ireland; all that we have done was done for her and through her. We represent progress and civilisation, the Empire and the flag. We are the incarnation of loyalty in the heart of the Rebel Island. We it was who defeated Home Rule, and upon us depends the future of English power in Ireland. Like the South African loyalists, we have a right to the countenance and support of England. Now England for a century has been despoiling us of our rights and of our very liberty. We are sacrificed ; we, the loyalists, for love of the rebels, and in the vain hope of conciliating the irreconcilables. By your concessions you will only add to the demands and the effrontery of the Nationalists. It is your weakness that has provoked all the crimes in Ireland. Concessions and conciliation stand for betrayal and weakness. Is it any fault of ours that we are a loyal and isolated minority in the midst of a disloyal majority ? Is this a reason why the weak should be sacrificed to the strong, and the faithful to the rebel ? Be careful ! If the persecution continues, the Garrison will have no course left but to go over to the enemy. A day will come when England will need us again to fight her battles against the rebels. Please God that she may still find us in her service, neither too discouraged nor too weak to defend once more the cause of the Union and of the Empire."

Such are the complaints and the menaces that come from the more extreme of the so-called loyalists of Ireland, from the ultras of the two sections of the colony, the Orangemen of Ulster and the Tories of the Anglican Ascendancy; from the large landlords, who are all-powerful in the Kildare Street Club and in the Landowners' Convention ; from the well-to-do middle class, the rich manufacturers, the professors of Trinity College. They never cease calling the Garrison to arms. As Unionists they make war on the Government when it is Liberal, because

it is friendly to the Nationalists; they oppose it even when it is Unionist and Conservative because then it seems lukewarm in their cause.[1] They carry on a campaign for a policy of coercion against a policy of reform, and demand compensation for their lost privileges. The condition of mind of these extremists is indeed strange; they are more royalist than the King, more imperialistic and reactionary than their English brothers and friends. "Ireland is a land of many sorrows," said John Bright. "Men fight for supremacy and call it Protestantism; they fight for evil and bad laws and call it acting in defence of property." Liberty, as the extremists understand it, means their own supremacy. To touch their privileges is to make an attempt upon the honour of the Empire. As loyalists, they threaten to throw the Crown into the Boyne if the Crown does not behave as they wish. It is in Ireland as at the Cape. The Milners and the Jamesons, who provoked the South African War, are brothers of the Irish Londonderrys and Aberoorns. Begetters of hatred and of anti-English feeling, they are in Ireland as in Africa, to use the phrase of an Irishman, "the bilious deposit on the national stomach."

This outburst of reaction on the part of the extremists could not fail to provoke a contrary movement on the part of the Unionists who were less blinded by personal interests and Celtophobia. For a long time the struggle against Home Rule had maintained an appearance of unity in the "bloc." There was, however, very little homogeneity in its nature, and it was composed of the most diverse elements, landlords and peasants, Conservatives and Liberals, Anglicans and Presbyterians. As soon as danger had been staved off for the time being, by the double rejection of Gladstone's Bills in 1886 and 1893, a schism

[1] In November, 1900, they brought about the downfall of one of the men who, from the Unionist side, had done most good for Ireland, Sir Horace Plunkett. He was accused of complicity with the Nationalists. They also caused the recall of two Unionist Chief Secretaries, Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. George Wyndham, who had promoted a conciliatory policy. The Irish Unionists in Parliament frequently vote against the Unionist government.

was certain to develop between the extremists and the moderates, between the blind and the far-seeing. Hence, during the last ten years there have been divisions in the "bloc." It will be useful here to indicate the significance and direction of these new developments, which are worthy of study not so much perhaps for their present importance but as symptoms of the future to which they bear witness.

In Ulster the rupture between the democratic and aristocratic elements is already manifesting itself clearly enough. In Belfast, as in some other towns, weary of the yoke of the Tories, and of the reactionary oligarchy, which has set itself at the head of Orangeism and uses it in the interests of class, a certain number of Orange democrats have seceded from the official Orange organisation to found an independent Orangeism as anti-Catholic as the other, but very Radical in its tendencies, and strongly hostile to the ruling Toryism. In the country, on the other hand, it is against the land system and landlordism that the peasants of Ulster have revolted. This movement is led by an energetic chief, a worthy rival of the Sharman-Crawfords, the Duffys, and the land reformers of the middle nineteenth century, Mr. T. W. Russell. These tenants are simple and poor, and they enjoy no privilege except that Tenant Right which dates back to their charter of settlement, and which they have always been able to make respected. With them the passion for the land dominates sectarian passion and anti-Catholicism. The religious war has little hold upon the rural masses. "The Pope is no doubt a terrible man," said John Mitchel, "but his Holiness has no writs out in Ulster." Self-interest then draws the Ulster peasantry to the cause of their brethren of the South. As Protestants and loyalists they do not work with the Nationalists, and their leader, Mr. Russell, is one of the men who, during the Home Rule crisis, fought with the greatest ardour for the cause of the Union. But weary, like their southern brethren, of the yoke of landlordism, they wish to become masters of the soil by a general purchase of their lands and expropriation

of the landlords. Thus from North to South the agrarian proletariat, Orange and Nationalist, has risen against the landed oligarchy of the soil, just as in urban Ulster the Radical democracy has risen against the political oligarchy.

These are the signs of the times which have given cause for reflection to a part at least of the Anglo-Saxon oligarchy, whether they be of the landlord or the middle class. These persons of moderate tendencies are not satisfied with the reactionary policy of the extremists, and they are separated from the latter on the question of the general attitude that should be adopted towards Ireland and the Irish democracy. This has produced a new fissure in the Unionist ranks, affecting in this case the Anglican class, the Ascendancy. There have always been in the Irish Ascendancy both Tories and Whigs. These last were born to political life in the second half of the eighteenth century, with Flood, Lucas, and, above all, Grattan. During the first three-quarters of the nineteenth, owing to their relative Liberalism, they were often elected members of Parliament by the Catholic peasants in opposition to the great Tory landlords. More tolerant than the latter, less irreconcilable, less hostile to everything Irish, they seem at present nearer to an acceptance of what is inevitable, the official downfall of their class. They seem to understand that the reign of the oligarchy is ended, and that landlordism is dead. The remnant of their privileges will be carried away by the next wave; the heroic hour, that of battle and of glory, has gone by, and the hour of departure has sounded. The small landlords and middle-class people are asking themselves whether they have no better prospect before them than to be sacrificed to the political ambitions of those ultra-Tories, masters of wealth, place and power, those lofty personages who have no thought but of the battle, and make use of smaller men without being of any use to them in return. Do they not behave, in fact, as do the Orange leaders towards the Belfast proletariat? Have they nothing better to offer the peasants and the people of Ireland than

a war to the death ? Will they never find their fatherland in Erin ? Should they not, as good sportsmen, take their part in the new order of things, and try to adapt themselves to the new situation, and to work for the prosperity of Ireland ? The Garrison is no more, but there may yet be a place in the future for an Irish aristocracy.

Such are the views which would seem to have haunted, for ten years or so, a certain number of Liberal landlords, such as Lord Monteagle, Lord Castletown, Lord Dunraven, and Lord Mayo. These landlords have inspired a policy of reform and conciliation, and no longer cling, as did their fathers and as do their neighbours, the extremists, to a purely negative programme. They are ambitious to do something positive for the reconstruction of Ireland. They wish to re-make the country, to reform abuses, to usher in a reign of tolerance, and to unite classes and parties ; their highest hope being to create a moderate party between the extremes of left and right. In 1895 they took part, although without much perseverance, in the agitation against the over-taxation of Ireland, and they helped Sir Horace Plunkett on the Recess Committee in his work for the amelioration of the economic condition of the country. In 1898 they were associated with the foundation of elective local government. In 1902 they took the initiative in a *rapprochement* with the farmers, with a view to the solution of the land question, and a Land Conference was held under the presidency of Lord Dunraven. It was composed of representatives of the two parties, and laid down the basis for a plan of general land purchase which prepared the way for the Land Act of 1903. More recently still an Irish Reform Association was founded, with the object of gaining under the existing regime of the Union all those reforms necessary for any amelioration of the present condition of Ireland. They are not Home Rulers, and they do not ask for an Irish Parliament, but they would like to see a large development of local government, which would give Ireland some

rights over the administration of her own finance, and definite powers in the matter of private Bills—in short, such effective control of purely Irish affairs as may be compatible with the maintenance of legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, and with the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament.[2]

There is still a great deal of prejudice, timidity, and even personal interest, in the views and tendencies of the Liberal section of the oligarchy, and Nationalist Ireland has not accepted their advances without reserve and distrust. The movement is fraught with consequences for the Ireland of to-morrow, but its future is still obscure, as is that of the Ascendancy itself. Will the colony as a whole accept its fall and the law of the majority ? Landlordism is condemned, but will the landlords go with it ? No one will regret the disappearance of the extremists, the Ultras, the absentees who have no ties in the country. In the past by their tyranny and entire disregard of their mission of civilisation they dishonoured the English regime in Ireland. In the present they have no other political conception than that of a system of public spoil, and as for loyalty, they can only say that it does not pay. But many will remain on their own demesnes, especially the small landlords, to whom Ireland means something more than land to sell, and patriotism something beyond their rents. They will be able to adapt themselves to their new position, and it is perhaps not too Utopian to suppose that after one or two generations, when they have no more to hope for from the Government, and above all, when Home Rule comes in some form or other, they will be Irish in heart and soul, *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*. Many of them will make for themselves a place among a people from whom they are now divided by an impassible barrier. And this may well mean the beginning for England of the real " Irish difficulty."

[2] See the Annual Reports of the Irish Reform Association. *Cf.* the Earl of Dunraven's *The Crisis in Ireland*, London and Dublin, 1905; and his *Outlook in Ireland*, 1907.

CHAPTER II.—THE TWO IRELANDS: NATIONAL IRELAND

Over against the British "Colony" stands the Ireland of the people—the national Ireland of history, the Ireland which England has not dared to exterminate, and which she has been unable in seven centuries either to conciliate or to absorb. It is in this Ireland that a political and social regeneration is slowly going forward, the results of which are still incomplete.

This Ireland is to be defined and delimited in a negative way. All those who belong neither to the "Garrison" nor to the "Colony" may be classed within it. It is mainly, but not exclusively, Catholic. It has won and continues to win many recruits from the Protestant ranks, as, on the other hand, many Catholics rally to the support of the "Garrison." There is no homogeneity in its ethnic origins; it includes descendants of the old Gaels, of the Danish invaders, of the Anglo-Normans, of the English of Elizabeth and of Cromwell. The great-grand-children of the Ironsides rub shoulders in its ranks with the great-grand-children of the old Celtic chiefs, the greater number of whom are now to be found, as Sir Jonah Barrington has said, among the coal-porters and quay-labourers of Dublin.

It was, as we have said, in the seventeenth century, under the strong hand of the Protector, that this national Ireland was formed, through the braying and fusing together of all the Irish of that day, of all the former occupants of Erin. The plantations and massacres turned the conquered into a rabble of miserable and pitiful helots without land, law, or rights of any kind.

The aristocracy was destroyed; the bourgeoisie had fled or had been run to earth; the peasant democracy, in the phrase of Lord Derby, was "nothing more than a part of the live stock upon the estate of the landlord." A century went by, and with the relaxation of the Penal Laws in the middle of the nineteenth century, and the period of freedom from 1782 to 1795, an improvement set in. Ireland, by means of commerce and education, began to reconstruct for herself an independent middle class, taught in good classical schools by old priests with a continental education. There was a Limerick draper in those times—the story is still told by his descendants—who would recite Homer for half an hour without a mistake. His eldest son translated Horace. The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 enabled Catholics, who had been electors since 1793, to hold seats in Parliament. But the same Act withdrew the vote from the greater part of the peasantry. It opened public offices to Catholics; but this was a vain concession, for they were still excluded by custom and practice. In certain respects the concession was even hurtful, for it whetted the appetites of all the renegades, Whigs, and opportunists, made them eligible for governmental patronage, and thus destroyed Catholic solidarity. Soon afterwards the Great Famine and emigration dealt a mortal blow to the peasantry and even to the middle classes, for the latter were recruited from the peasants, and that source was now exhausted. It was Mr. Gladstone, who, as everyone knows, in 1869 opened the era of those great reforms which were, if not to make Ireland wholly free, at least to liberate her from most of her chains. Legislation was passed which gave the peasantry security of tenure, and led the way to a scheme of voluntary land purchase. In 1884 the Suffrage was made quasi-universal,[1] and in 1898 a system of elective local administration was established. But

[1] Ireland had, in 1832, 92,152 electors out of 7,767,401 inhabitants, *i.e.*, 1·19 per cent. (Acts of 1829 and 1832). An Act of 1850 slightly enlarged the Irish electorate, which the English reforms of 1867-8 did not touch; in 1868 Ireland had 222,450 electors. The Act of 1884

Ireland did not succeed in obtaining either a government of her choice, or the political reforms which, by whatever names, they may be called, would confer autonomy upon her. Her political evolution has stopped half-way.

Stripped of her aristocracy, with no leaders except the clergy, cruelly decimated and drained by the everlasting curse of emigration, Ireland still finds in the peasantry her most numerous class and her best support. The farmers or tenants, who are now legally invested with real rights, and with guarantees against the landlords, although in many respects they are from the social point of view still enslaved, are tending to become by purchase the owners of the soil. But the labourers and agricultural workers are in poorer case. They have neither decent homes nor an assured wage, for if there is a shortage of labour in Ireland, there is also a shortage of regular work for the labourers. Industry is in a very reduced condition, and the working classes naturally share in the depression. Finally, the middle class, which was so profoundly affected by the Great Famine, is regaining its ground, but only by slow and difficult stages, for lack of opportunity. As a consequence, they are still weak both in numbers and in culture; their secondary education is bad, and higher education is practically closed to them; and they have little wealth, for Irish commerce and industry are in a stagnant condition. Moreover, they are thrown back, by an unintelligent system of education, upon the so-called liberal professions, and at their highest can only hope to reach the level of the Protestant bourgeoisie, without becoming really one with it. The Protestants are a fallen aristocracy, and they are contemptuous of the Catholics, who are a rising democracy.

It would be pleasant to believe that the various classes which make up national Ireland have derived from their

finally put Ireland on the same electoral footing as England; in 1886 she had 742,120 electors in a population of 5,174,836, or 14 per cent. (Comte de Franqueville, *Le Gouvernment et le Parlement Britanniques*, Paris, 1887, II., p. 300-325).

common misfortunes and their common struggles such wisdom as would lead them to confront England and the English colony in a solid and coherent mass, free from division and strong in unity. Unfortunately it would seem to be a very general law that slavery and suffering engender dissension, and excite party against party. Each party has the same end before it, the salvation and liberty of the country; but this end is understood in various ways, and there is no agreement on the methods of attaining it. Ireland, during her ascent in the nineteenth century, has given birth to political divisions, and from the time of O'Connell's first triumphs she has hardly once achieved, even under Parnell, that perfect political cohesion which is no doubt a chimera, and which in any case the conqueror can so easily break, and has so much interest in breaking. The Liberator found his enemies in Young Ireland, and Young Ireland had to encounter the opposition of John Mitchel and the Revolutionaries. Democratic, or (to use the consecrated term) "Nationalist" Ireland has always had its factions, not to speak of those perverts who have gone over to Unionism, sometimes from conviction—for anything may happen—and sometimes from interest and ambition, as did Keogh, who in 1852 betrayed the hopes of the constitutional party. It is an example which will never lack imitators. We may surely accept it as a platitude that political divisions of men in the same social strata may be referred in origin to their temperament rather than to their doctrines. If we put on one side, then, the moderates and the opportunists, and on the other the more violent and extreme parties, we find ourselves confronted in Ireland with the constitutional Nationalists, who are the most numerous and most powerful party, and the Separatist minority—the Intransigeants or Extremists, the adherents of "Physical Force,"—who are the successors and modern emulators of the old Fenians.

I.—Separatism or "Physical Force."

Fenianism, or "physical force" that is to say, revolutionary action, by conspiracy or armed rebellion, with the overthrow of British power in Ireland and the separation of Ireland from England as the end in view, is but one phase in the eternal war of the two countries. It is the secret war which has replaced open war since the time when Ireland ceased to be in a position to fight her powerful neighbour on equal terms. The first great date in the new period is the Insurrection of 1798, and its first great man is Theobald Wolfe Tone, closely followed by Robert Emmet, the young and generous martyr of the patriotic rebellion. The gospel of "Physical Force" was discredited for a long while by the success, rather apparent perhaps than real, of O'Connell and Constitutional agitation; but it awoke again to life towards the middle of the nineteenth century amid the horrors of the Great Famine and the stir of Continental revolutions. With John Mitchel it created that movement of revolt into which Young Ireland was drawn, and which with Smith O'Brien came to a miserable end—killed rather by the thunderbolt of the clergy, than by the powder of the British army.

It reappeared in a new form in 1858, 1865, and 1867, under the name of Fenianism, with Stephens and O'Donovan Rossa, aided by support from America, and made itself active through secret societies, raids, and *coups de main*. But the Revolution failed to come into being, and the movement fell into the ways of crime, and was dishonoured by the outrages of the Invincibles and the dynamiters. But although insurrection and rebellion have proved abortive, and conspiracy given way to anarchy, the revolutionary spirit is not yet dead in Ireland. It has survived its reverses, altering its methods but not its doctrines, and we recognise its spirit in the intransigeant "Separatism" of to-day.

What is at the bottom of this revolutionary force to which, despite its apparent failures, Ireland owes the small measure of reparation which she has obtained from England? There is, before and beyond all, hatred of England, inexpiable hatred of the English yoke, of English tyranny and corruption in Ireland. There is, further, the conviction that Ireland will never have a chance to live her life until separated from England, and that national freedom can never proceed from "moral force" but from "physical force" alone. Distinct and different from Whiteboyism—that is, agrarian assassination in the service of the tenant's private vengeance against the landlord—the Physical Force party, unlike the Constitutional, has no care for the claims of this or that class of citizens, whether it be for Catholic emancipation or peasant rights. On the contrary, it has been careful not to put the cause of national freedom in tow of the cause of the farmers. With regard to the land question, it preaches a doctrine of nationalisation of the soil which is directly contrary to the ideas of the Irish peasantry. It hates the landlords, but much less because they are landlords than because they are the English garrison. Perhaps at the bottom of its heart it cherishes the dream of an Irish republic. But at present it has but one ideal, one end: the liberation of Ireland, the attainment of national freedom by the path of separation.

The Irish Physical Force party is in its nature clearly distinct from the various revolutionary forces which have been at work on the Continent during the course of the nineteenth century, though it resembles them in one sense, since like them it rejects *a priori* all constitutional methods, and disdains reform as a substitute for revolution. Of Continental Anarchism it has no strain, except in those desperate moments in which it has practically lapsed into anarchism. It has not for psychological basis the spirit of revolt against fact, nor the primitive design of destroying everything to make

room for the Utopia of a new world which should proceed by spontaneous generation from the ruins of the old. Faced with the social miseries of the time, it has not, like Revolutionary Socialism, acquired the desire to substitute for an egoistic and bourgeois society a communistic and humanitarian one. It does not, like Russian Nihilism, represent the effort of an intellectual proletariat to destroy an autocracy. Nothing is further from its national aspirations than the Federalist doctrines of the Paris Commune. Nothing is more foreign to it than that first principle of Continental Socialism, the Class War; and it never ceases to preach the union of classes and creeds under the aegis of Irish nationality. Its source is to be found not in a social nor in a moral malady, but in a political fact, the stranger's yoke; not in the bad government of England but in the very fact of British domination. "Not foreign government but foreign rule is Ireland's bane," said Wolfe Tone. Of continental revolutionaries perhaps they resemble most the men of 1848, with their dreams of popular freedom and their national enthusiasm. One thinks of a Mazzini or a Garibaldi crying, *Fuori i Barbari.*[2]

What traces of Fenianism or of "physical force" remain in the movement? There remains less an active party of deed than a propagandist party of doctrine; and the doctrine is rather a manifesto of intransigeance than a positive programme. Clearly the situation has changed during the last half century. Ireland is disarmed, and rebellion, at least in time of general peace, is impossible. The devotees of physical force, then, can for the present only cultivate the revolutionary attitude,

2 The greater part of the leaders of the revolutionary party have been of the middle class, and as many Catholic as Protestant. Wolfe Tone was the son of a Presbyterian carriage-builder in Dublin; Mitchel of a Presbyterian minister; Robert Emmet of a Protestant doctor, Kickham, Luby and John O'Leary were doctors or medical students. O'Mahony was a gentleman farmer from Tipperary. There was nothing of the *déclassé* about them; they were not crazed by that kind of science which does not bring bread or a career. Even to-day there are Separatists in Belfast, and even among the students of Trinity College.

and preach the Separatist propaganda. Nevertheless, for the last twenty-five years the course of events has influenced many minds, and sometimes the most moderate, in the direction of intransigeance. This is no doubt to be ascribed to the growth of English Imperialism, to the failure of Parnellism and the rejection of Home Rule, to the spectacle of those dissensions during which the politicians gave themselves up to self-admiration over Parnell's corpse, and to the emigration which continues to drain the country's best blood. All this has produced the recent development in Ireland of " extremist " ideas, and of the party which upholds them, a party which includes enthusiasts who would prepare a future for Ireland, dreamers living upon an ideal, independent men who have become disgusted with the weaknesses and compromises of Parliamentarianism, a few literary men, and a populace dominated by hatred of England, with the inevitable following of corner boys and worthless persons which a propaganda, preaching revolution, ever attracts.

They have retained the primary thesis of the old revolutionaries, namely, that outside of separation there is no salvation. It is this thesis which they brandish to-day in the faces of the moderate Nationalists, against the Home Rulers, and against Home Rule itself. " Home Rule would be useless," they say. " Liberty to be sure must be complete. It would be so with the Repeal of the Union which O'Connell claimed ; it would not be so with a scheme of subordinate autonomy, for under those conditions Irish liberty would always depend upon British good-will. As John Mitchel said : ' We must have Ireland not for certain peers, or nominees of peers, in College Green, but Ireland for the Irish.' We want a veritable Irish Parliament, a national and sovereign assembly, and not some sort of a local Committee to administer ' gas and water ' and other small affairs of the same nature. Your Home Rule is but a decoy, and you, the Home Rulers, are, willingly or unwillingly, mere Unionists, for you accept the British chain and do not

strive to break it. You should once for all cut the Gordian knot, and by Separation assure National Independence

"Legal and constitutional action will not lead us to that independence. England has never yielded except to fear or to constraint, and the famous doctrine of moral force has never harmed anyone except its authors. There is no use in making speeches, and asking questions, and voting upon the orders of the day, for it is not words that will save us, but deeds. Has Ireland ever gained anything from this game of dupery which is played at Westminster? Has she the right to compromise herself by sending representatives to the enemy's country, to that Parliament which is for her, as John Mitchel said, a den of corruption, a factory of coercion, and the eternal witness of her subjection.

"For ten years, from 1880 to 1890, she had in the House of Commons a leader of the first order, a capable and united party; and this party were not able to reduce the overtaxation of Ireland by a penny! The game is useless and degrading; it is a school of slavery and of Anglicisation; Parliamentarianism can only propagate the spirit of indifference and of opportunism, and will always sacrifice the national ideal to the satisfaction of vanity and to the traffic of self-interest. And while you hypnotise yourself with this Westminster which you make the centre of the world, you alone do not perceive that Ireland is exhausted to death and is dying at your hands."

Powerful in attack, violent to the point of injustice towards the Parliamentarians, the Separatists are less happy in their exposition of ways and means. They proscribe the constitutional method, but how are they going to replace it? They stand for physical force, which is at the moment impotent. But in their view, "physical force" is not limited to armed resistance or rebellion, but stands for everything outside moral force, from parliamentary obstruction as practised by Parnell, which is precisely the opposite of Parliamentarianism, to

the refusal to pay taxes, and the "no rent" movement. Besides, though physical force be impossible to-day, will it be so to-morrow? Will not its day come when a great war brings England into conflict with Europe, when Europe will sustain us by force? For this future we must prepare ourselves by propagating in the first place the idea and the necessity of "physical force," and then by strengthening the Irish nation from the moral and the material point of view, and practising towards England the policy of exclusion, that is to say, by ignoring her. Sinn Fein! Ourselves alone! We must develop our strength, and exalt our souls. We must have an end of weakness and compromise. We must follow the example set by Hungary in her victorious struggle against the crown of the Hapsburgs.[3] If we are refused autonomy, let us take it. Let us hold British government null and void. Let us have no more members at Westminster but call together a National Assembly in Dublin. Let us substitute courts of arbitration for the law courts. Let us make war on anglicisation, emigration, Irish enlistment in the English army.[4] Let us develop our industries, and create a prosperous Ireland, and, above all, a national Ireland, by reconstructing for ourselves, by means of literature, arts, and crafts, a truly Irish civilisation.[5]

Passive resistance, an irreconcilable and separatist propaganda, and the refusal to recognise the Parliament of Westminster—for we leave aside the idea of the Gaelic revival, which does not belong exclusively to Separatism, and the somewhat puerile proposal for the constitution of a State, at all points Irish, above the English

3 See the pamphlets published in Dublin, 1904 and 1905 (Duffy & Co.) *The Sinn Fein Policy* and *The Resurrection of Hungary, a Parallel for Ireland.*

4 It was the Separatists who started the war against emigration and against the enlistment of soldiers in the British army. Thirty years ago, it is said 284 out of every 1,000 British soldiers were Irish, to-day only 115.

5 See later Chapter on the Gaelic Movement in which the Separatist party have taken an active share.

State in Ireland—constitute the programme of modern extremism. Fenianism has passed away, but Separatism has survived it. The revolutionists and conspirators have been metamorphosed into intransigeants, irreconcilables, and extremists, who know that their dream is for the present an impossible one, but do not, for that reason, alter in their devotion to it, and who, in spite of everything, uphold the banner of independence. They represent the reaction against the meanness and compromise of politics, against English corruption, and Irish betrayals; they represent the unalterable ideal of fatherland as opposed to the reigning spirit of opportunism, the impossible which one must be bent on attaining, if one wishes, humanly speaking, to attain the possible. Let us forget, then, those elements which must sometimes seem regrettable or ridiculous in the acts and ideas of these potential rebels, and recognise that they constitute in Ireland the reserve force of Nationalism, or if one prefers to put it, integral Nationalism.

II.—Constitutional Agitation.

The main division of the political army is made up of the "Constitutionalists," or, as they are usually called, the "Nationalists," the term "Separatist" being reserved for the representatives of the Extremist minority. Their object is to obtain for Ireland the reparation which is due to her in the political, economic, and social spheres, with self-government as the crowning reform. Self-government in their programme means the widest attainable scheme of national autonomy, whether it be called Repeal as under O'Connell, or Home Rule as it is to-day, or by any other name such as may be given to it in the future. As for methods of action, the Nationalists ask for none except those which are open to them under the constitution, popular agitation and Parliamentary action. Thus their procedure is constitutional, although

their main demand is precisely the reversal of the present Irish constitution. These are the directing principles of Constitutional Nationalism. Everyone is at liberty to understand them according to his taste, to interpret the words " Constitutional means " in a wide or a strict sense, to make Irish autonomy under Imperial supremacy the final end of his aspirations—" Separation is neither possible nor desirable," Mr. John Redmond, the present leader of the party, is reported to have said—or to regard Home Rule as simply a step towards a Separation, which he regards as both desirable and possible.

This Nationalism was born in its modern form at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and became fully conscious of itself with Daniel O'Connell when in 1823 the latter formed his celebrated Catholic Association, and, in 1829, led into the British Parliament the first Irish Parliamentary Party. We thus find from the beginning Parliamentary action at Westminster, supported by popular organization and agitation in Ireland, which are henceforth to be the two legal weapons of the Nationalist movement. Both are necessary, and indeed, as the Irish say, the two are inseparable. Parliamentary action is necessary to uphold the national cause before the constitutional tribunal, and to make the voice of Ireland heard through the world, for the whole world listens to what is said in the British Parliament. But what would be the influence of an Irish party at Westminster if it were unsupported by popular action in Ireland, if the Irish people remained impassive spectators of the contest, and failed to show in effective fashion their determination to support their representatives ? If it be necessary for Ireland that she should maintain on foreign soil a " brigade " which, like the Irish Brigade at Fontenoy, fights the good fight against England, she must likewise maintain at home some form of political organisation and agitation. It is the duty of the one to unite, discipline, and direct the Nationalist forces ; of the other to constrain England, by an energetic and skilful deploying

of these same forces, to great measures of reform such as she has never consented to carry except when confronted by threats and violence. "Agitate, agitate," said Lord Salisbury twenty years ago to the Unionists of Ulster; and Lord Salisbury had not much of the professional agitator in him. "Nothing is got to-day except through agitation!"

For the last century there has hardly been a time at which Ireland has not possessed some one or other of those great Leagues of popular agitation, and it is remarkable that in this respect she has given modern England her models. The periods during which she has had none may, perhaps, have been periods of calm, but they have also been times of political reaction and social demoralisation. Whenever popular agitation has grown slack and agitation feeble, there has been a fresh outbreak of oppression on the part of the "Castle." The Catholic Association, the first of these Leagues in point of time, was also one of the most perfect. With its association in every barony, its county committees, its central committee, its "rent" of a penny per head, with O'Connell as its leader, and the priests as its local agents, it was indeed a veritable representative assembly of the nation. Though an extra-legal power, it was better respected and obeyed than the actual legal power; it was a government that could protect the people and train them for action, while inculcating all the time a respect for order; and it succeeded after six years' agitation of the most orderly character, and without violence, in wresting from England the concession which had been promised since the Union, namely, Catholic Emancipation. The Catholic Association was followed by the Repeal Association. Then, after the Famine and the Insurrection of 1848, came the Irish Tenants' League, whose activity awakened many hopes that were too soon to be deceived. The Home Government Association was established in 1870; and under Parnell there arose two new organisations, the Land League and the National

League. These were bodies similar to the present United Irish League, which was founded by Mr. William O'Brien in 1898, and which will, when the time comes, make room for a new organisation, the heir of all its predecessors.[1]

The striking feature of all these leagues, throughout the successive transformations which the majority had to undergo, in order to escape coercive laws, is their democratic constitution. Even under O'Connell, despite the predominant personality of the "Liberator," the members of the County Committee were chosen by popular election, and they in their turn elected the members of the Central Committee. Later on American influence made itself felt in the constitution of the Irish Leagues, and many characteristics of American political organisations, of what is called there the "Machine," are noticeable, if not in the Land League, which was a Committee of Public Safety rather than a constitutional association, at least in the National League and in the United Irish League of to-day.

The principle of the formation of parties in the United States is, as is known, the co-existence in each electoral division, from the ward or quarter to the State or Union, of an Executive Committee, as a permanent organ, and of an annual or periodical Convention. This Convention, which is composed of delegates elected by the Convention of the division below it,[2] elects the members of the Executive Committee as well as the candidates for local elections and the delegates to the Convention of the division immediately above it. This rigorous separation of the executive and representative powers, at all steps of the ladder, this legal subordination of the executive to the representative power, is but imperfectly applied in Ireland. The United Irish League has for basis local

[1] After 1864 Ireland had concurrently the National League, founded by the Independent Constitutionalists, and the National Association, founded by the clergy with a view to the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland. Similarly after the Parnell split in 1890 there was a Parnellite and an anti-Parnellite organisation.

[2] Or if it be a "primary" by all the members.

assemblies or Branches, analogous to the American "primaries"; to be a member of a Branch one must take the pledge or engagement to obey the rules of the League and pay an annual subscription. Above the branches in each parliamentary division there is a permanent Executive and Convention. The Convention merely chooses the parliamentary candidate; the Executive which does the rest of the business is not named by the Convention but is composed of a certain number of delegates from each Branch. A National Directory and Convention stands at the head of the whole organisation. The Directory is composed of delegates from the local Executives, to which are added a small number of delegates of the Nationalist parliamentary group and of persons chosen by co-option. This Directory selects from itself a standing Committee which exercises the real power. As for the National Annual Convention this is a very numerous and heterogeneous assembly, a sort of composite parliament which includes delegates from all the representative Nationalist bodies, from the Branches and Executives of the League, from District, Town and County Councils, and various other Nationalist organisations,[3] with all the members of the directories, all Nationalist M.P.'s, and clergymen. Its function is to deliberate on the general situation and on the policy of the Nationalist party.[4] Thus it appears that this organisation, taken as a whole, neither represents the principle of the election of each representative assembly by the assembly of the electoral grade below it, nor the principle of the nomination of each Executive by the representative assembly of the same grade. It has not

3 The Land and Labour Association, the United Irish League of Great Britain, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, etc.

4 The United Irish League consists of (January, 1906) 1,460 Branches and 77 Executives (out of 85 divisions with a Nationalist majority); the largest figures, it is said, that have ever been seen in Ireland. Each branch to be affiliated must pay a minimum annual fee of £3. The affiliation fees produced, in 1905, £3,112; in 1904, £2,573. Add to these receipts individual subscriptions and contributions from England and America, the figures of which are not published. From October, 1879, to October, 1882, the Treasurer of the Land League received a

the systematic simplicity of the American "Machine," nor has it, if we may say so, its fine theoretical precision.

But is its practical working, nevertheless, vicious and corrupt? Are the Irish leagues, for all their democratic appearance, only a parody of representation? Are the "wires pulled," as in America, by a few all-powerful bosses who "machine" the Executives and the Conventions, followed and upheld by a cortege of clients whom they pay with place and profit, the spoils-system being the end and the basis of the organisation? We may say, without hesitation, that what is true of America is infinitely less true of Ireland. It cannot be denied, indeed, that personalities play a considerable part in Irish politics, that the popular vote often carries no great weight, and that the Conventions are as a rule prepared and "packed" with care. In certain respects the Irish boss has greater facilities than his American parallel for establishing his authority, but he has more difficulty in maintaining it. This is shown by the recent experience of Mr. William O'Brien, who found himself one fine day shown to the door of the United Irish League, of which he was himself the founder. The conditions in the two countries differ in that there are fewer votes to be gained in Ireland, notably from the local Executives, and in that the parliamentary or co-opted element exercises a great influence in the National Directory, and above all in the Standing Committee of this Directory. But what gives the American "bosses" and "wire-pullers" their strength, if it be not the spoils-system? Now "spoils" do not exist in Ireland. No positions, no lucrative offices

sum total of £244,820. This was during the acute land crisis. (Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, p. 373).

The constitution of the National League was much simpler than that of the United Irish League. The National League consisted of Branches, County Conventions, and a Central Council. The County Conventions were composed of delegates from the Branches. The Central Council consisted of 48 members, of whom 32 were elected by the County Conventions, and 16 chosen by the Nationalist parliamentary group.

It should be added that in England, as in America, there is a League affiliated to the Nationalist League in Ireland.

can be hoped for or promised except, perhaps, since 1898, such as depend upon the local government bodies, and the appropriation of which by the Nationalists may well change political morals to some extent. There are no profits or benefits to be allotted except such as the use or abuse of the popular weapon of boycotting may bring in the way of favours. In short the important fact is that Irish politics can nourish only a small number of individuals. The American "machine" works with the mutual enrichment of its members in view; in Ireland the Leagues ask for money instead of giving it, and the electors, instead of being paid by the organisation, must pay it. Morality gains no less than politics by this difference.

Another difference to be noted is the much wider sphere of action of an Irish league than of an American political organisation. These Leagues, since 1826, when the Catholic Association organised the electoral revolt of the Catholic peasants against their landlords, have always, as their primary duty, attended to political elections. They choose the candidates and make certain of their election, after having previously carried out the work of registration; they do the same to-day for the elections for local boards. But they are not satisfied, as are the American "parties," with this electoral duty, with or without a division of spoils. Although their organisation is rarely spread throughout the entire country, although half of Ulster has always escaped their sway, and although they have usually been strongly opposed by the more moderate elements of society, yet they have always striven to be the sovereign directors of the nation's policy, and have flattered themselves with the thought of being the arbiters of its destinies. They have taken it upon themselves to fix the official programme of national claims, to control the action of the parliamentary party, and to conduct, according to their desire, the struggle against England.

In the organisation of agitation is to be found the great

work of a national league in Ireland. It forces on the constitutional war, in the Press and on the platform, with the object of wresting from England the necessary concessions, and with the somewhat ambitious pretension of making government in Ireland "dangerous and impossible." For this purpose a campaign of popular meetings is organised throughout the country all the year round, and at these the tyranny of England is denounced and the claims of Erin asserted in a series of flamboyant resolutions, orators and audiences intoxicating themselves with phrases, *raimeis*, and illusions. It would be well with Ireland if she could be saved by the eloquence of words alone! It is not an easy matter to make government impossible if one confines oneself to the legal battle, and that is precisely why agrarian was soon added to political agitation. But as it happened England has recently put into Irish hands a weapon, which, with their usual skill in battle, they have been quick to turn against her, and which, peaceful though it is in its nature, may, in the long run, turn out dangerous enough. The new Local Government Act has given over the District and County Councils since 1898 to the Nationalists, and brought them in many cases under the control of the members of the League. By gaining the support of these elected bodies, the League has assured its position, and if it should one day be dissolved by the Government, it will be re-discovered in the local assemblies. Moreover, the Irish democracy has gained a foothold in the administration of the country; and how can an anti-National and foreign government resist the popular impact, which, beginning with the local bodies, will soon be directed against the "Castle" itself?

From 1879 onwards, with Parnell and Davitt, the land war has taken first place in the agitation. It is no longer merely the Government, but landlordism as well, that must be made impossible and destroyed. The Leagues organised a resistance to evictions, which now bore the aspect of regular sieges or fixed battles. After

eviction, they supported the peasants in money and in kind; established vigilance committees to watch suspects, arbitration courts to judge delinquents; and by a regime of more or less peaceful intimidation brought heavy pressure to bear on the landlords, and their supporters in the country districts, the grabbers, and the graziers. As is known, the Land League attempted in 1881, too late and unsuccessfully, a No Rent Campaign. Later on, under the National League, and with its tacit approbation, the attempt was renewed, in a more skilful form, under the name of the "Plan of Campaign," with happy results, which were somewhat obscured by the disasters of New Tipperary.

The official and responsible leaders in this agitation have always denounced and proscribed all criminal acts. Unfortunately the latter found a cause of renewal in the gravity of the crisis as well as in the severity of those laws which allowed 21,000 families to be evicted in less than two years.[5] If there have been culpable slips of the tongue on the part of professional agitators, if even in our own day the tone of popular meetings does not always exclude a certain exaggeration of language—threats against individuals, provocations, battle cries which one must be careful not to take too literally, and which must be interpreted *cum grano salis*, and with regard to the popular environment in which they are delivered—yet it cannot at least be denied that the Leagues have never failed on every occasion to condemn the crimes of Whiteboyism,[6] and to declare that such things only served to dishonour the cause of Ireland and to provoke coercion by making such coercion legitimate. As a matter of fact agrarian crime has considerably decreased since 1881-86. There are still cases of mutilation of cattle, burning of crops, and threatening letters; but attempts upon the person are now very rare. For criminal

5 *Mulhall, Dictionary of Statistics*, London, 1886, p. 171.
6 Except, perhaps, for a few weeks of the year 1881. (See Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, p. 330).

violence the Leagues have substituted a new method, a weapon extremly effective although difficult to justify on moral grounds. This is the boycott, which has been very widely employed on certain occasions. They have, as Mr. William O'Brien said a short time ago, succeeded in replacing in the Land War gun shots by tongue shots. Boycotting of a more or less peaceful nature has become a custom, and has established itself in the endemic state. Sometimes everyone in a district, by spontaneous accord, cuts off relations with the guilty party, who is then never spoken to except to be saluted with a gibe or an insult. Sometimes meetings of condemnation are held in his neighbourhood, to which the people go in bands with fifes and drums, and parade, with menacing cries, before his house. A boycotted grazier can no longer sell his beasts. A case has been known where a grabber, who was a schoolmaster by calling, was abandoned forthwith by his pupils on their parents' order. If the boycotted man owns a shop, his customers leave him, and in a few weeks the figures of his business may have fallen by half. The extreme case is that in which the boycott is extended not only to the principal in the matter, but to all his workmen, to all who have business dealings with him, and even to those who speak to him. The object of attack, whether he be a landlord or a person of some other class, lives in the country as a pariah.

The Leagues have always boasted that they have made boycotting as legal a weapon as putting on the index, or as "exclusive dealing" in Birmingham or Glasgow. They compare their action to that of the English Trade Unions, and claim that they employ the same policy in defence of the agrarian proletariat against the landlords, as the Trade Unions in defence of the workers against the patrons or employers. The Courts of Justice have never admitted this analogy, the first foundation of which, namely, corporate responsibility, is lacking. They punish with the greatest rigour all acts of intimidation

or criminal conspiracy, and even condemn with unjustifiable severity, the simple facts of social ostracism which result from the spontaneous consensus of the community without recourse to menace or to violence. The law, to tell the truth, is often powerless against a practice which, under subtle and varied forms, belongs to every country and every time. Coercion, as Lord Salisbury pointed out in 1885, has little effect ; boycotting increases despite it, and at bottom depends solely upon the changing humour of the people.

Unfortunately such a weapon must inevitably engender abuses, and especially when it is in the hands of a political league. It provokes many abuses of a different kind in the English Trade Unions, where, it is true, they attract less notice, so well is public opinion accustomed to them. In this connection the latest of the Irish Leagues has lent itself to criticism, and during the agitation of 1901 and 1902, many local committees tried to exercise, under pretext of agrarian warfare, a petty social and political tyranny. In the time of the National League, when abuses appeared, it was enough for the parish priest to write to the chiefs of the League in Dublin to have things put in order. Under the new League, the control of the chiefs is not so powerfully felt ; and perhaps the clergy, too, are no longer able to exercise the same influence over local policy. The Branch Committees, at all events, were not always conscious of their responsibilities. They imposed, officially, measures of boycotting in an interest which was not always the general interest, and forced recalcitrants to enrol themselves in the League by the simple method of blackmail. A business man in Tallow, unjustly accused of grabbing, was ruined on this pretext by his rivals in the locality. To pass from the serious to the comic, the story is told of an old woman who was boycotted in Sligo for having been seen in conversation with a policeman, and of a shopkeeper in Castlebar who received similar treatment for having displayed in his

shop a coloured picture representing the Siege of Ladysmith.

I am well aware that you cannot conduct an agitation and, above all, an agrarian agitation, with a *personnel* of good, peaceable bourgeois, nor with the sole weapon of moral suasion. But this explains how, even in Ireland, the Leagues, and the latest comer perhaps above all, —its operations have been in certain respects more open to reproach and less justified by circumstances— are often attacked by men of independent and moderate minds. Their narrowness, their intransigeant temper, their official exclusiveness, and their intrigues, have been criticised. One must always see the good with the bad, and it cannot be denied that they have represented, in a somewhat advanced fashion no doubt, but without betraying them, the general wishes of the nation. Their chiefs may have done much that they ought to have left undone, and left undone much that they ought to have done ; nevertheless they have carried the flag of Ireland, and to liken the Leagues—as English opinion fain would liken them—to bodies of the nature of the *Maffia* and the *Camorra*, is strangely to misconceive them. They must be regarded in reality as an expression, sometimes a little extreme and wrong-headed, but on the whole sincere enough, of the popular aspirations of Ireland.

III.—Parliamentary Action.

Parliamentary action, the second of the weapons of constitutional Nationalism, is, in the first place, to the Irish people, a means of defence or general protection against English oppression ; and, in the second, a method by which the fruits of agitation may be gathered in legislation.

The formation in the British Parliament of an organised and united Nationalist party belongs to comparatively recent history. When O'Connell entered

Parliament in 1829 he had only a handful of personal supporters, such as Sheil and Wyse, isolated, and, as it were, lost, among the landlords, who then occupied the great majority of Irish seats. The corrupting influence of Whiggery had also to be counted with. Young Ireland had tried to turn opinion against Whiggery in the name of the great principle, then for the first time posited, of the independence of the Irish party at Westminster. Whiggery triumphed in 1852, thanks to clerical support, with the sorry figures of Sadlier and Keogh; and remained for twenty years master of the Parliamentary field, where the national flag was now only upheld by some survivors of the Repeal Movement, George Henry Moore, Smith O'Brien, and J. B. Dillon, on their return from exile, and by a few newcomers like The O'Donoghue and Sir John Gray. The turning point was marked in 1872 by the celebrated Kerry[1] election and the institution of secret voting. At the General Election of 1874 the Nationalist Party was, for the first time, under Butt's leadership, a majority in the Irish representation at Westminster; it held 60 seats out of 103. Eleven years later, after Mr. Gladstone's electoral reforms, it reached the height of its power, with the 80 or 85 seats which have since represented its normal strength. These were the times of dramatic struggle for the Irish party under Parnell. It seemed as if the hour of triumph had come when Gladstone rallied to the flag of Home Rule, and the Irish party became arbiters of the destinies of English parties. Unhappily success, power, unity itself, disappeared when Parnell disappeared. For ten years the sad spectacle was seen of 85 members, their leader dead, passing the time in quarrels amongst themselves. The anti-Parnellites under Mr. Justin MacCarthy and then under Mr. John Dillon, excommunicated Mr. John Redmond, and the Parnellites remained faithful to their

1 When Sir R. Blennerhasset was victorious over Mr. Dease, Lord Kenmare's cousin. It was called the Clare Home Rule Election in allusion to O'Connell's election in County Clare in 1828, on the eve of Catholic Emancipation.

leader's memory, while a third party was formed round Mr. Healy. Not until 1900 was unity re-established (almost, and for how long ?) in the Irish Party, thanks to the preponderating influence of the United Irish League.

This fact shows that there are advantages in the interests of unity in the system established by Parnell, in virtue of which Irish members of Parliament are designated first by the League (in County Conventions or otherwise) and then presented by it to the popular vote. Out of 85 Nationalist members there are therefore about 70 or 75 soldiers of the League, bound to obey it, if not commanding in its name.[2] Following the American practice, the League exacts a pledge. Those chosen by it must uphold its programme and accept neither favour nor office from Government. In return, according to the custom in use in many countries where Parliamentary representatives are not paid (notably in Canada) members who have not means enough for the expenses of Parliamentary life, receive an indemnity from a special fund called " The Parliamentary Fund," which is fed by collections regularly made in the country, and by large subscriptions from England, and especially from America.[3] This has led to the creation of a class of professional politicians in Ireland. It has given rise, also, to the bitter and contemptuous attacks directed by England against this " kept party " and these " paid demagogues " to which the Irish answer that they would rather remunerate their representatives than be represented by plutocrats who would defend only the interests of their class, and that it is more honourable for the electors to

[2] They constitute the official party. The others are Independents opposed to the League, or men who, thanks to personal qualities, pass muster without subscribing to it.

[3] The Parliamentary Fund is administered by three Trustees, one a Catholic Bishop, another the Party Leader. About one-half of the total is furnished from Ireland. American subscriptions were very considerable in Parnell's time, but they have greatly diminished latterly, despite missions regularly sent to re-kindle the zeal of the Irish-Americans.

pay the elected than to be paid by them. England can afford to condemn professional politicians since she is certain of finding in her middle classes independent men always available for political life. But where is Ireland to find unpaid representatives? In the Ascendancy, whose interests are altogether contrary to hers? Even her middle class is somewhat limited and not sufficiently wealthy. If she is to be assured of honest representation must she not pay her politicians, although, perhaps, their discipline will scarcely be a complete set-off to their facile violence of speech, or their lack of experience and of culture?

This is not to say that they have been on the whole unequal to their task, and it cannot be denied that they have held strictly aloof from all corruption. For a quarter of a century they have given proof at Westminster of remarkable qualities, as well as of remarkable failings; rarely has such a collection of faults and of virtues been found. "They are," says one of their political opponents,[4] "far beyond any similar group of English members in rhetorical skill and quickness of intelligence and decision, qualities which, no doubt, belong to the mechanism rather than the soul of politics, but which the practical worker in public life will not despise. But even when tried by a higher standard the Irish members need not fear the judgment of history. They have often, in my opinion, misconceived the true interests of their country, but they have been faithful to those interests as they understood them, and proved themselves notably superior to sordid personal aims." They have men of talent far above the average, such as Mr. John Redmond, the leader of the party, such as Mr. Dillon, son of the '48 rebel, or as, formerly, Mr. Sexton, one of the best types of Parliamentary debater. They have also many an *enfant terrible* who knows but how to make a scene or a scandal, and who by lack of self-restraint and self-respect, by his intemperance of language, discredits his country

4 Plunkett, *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 91.

and alienates English opinion. It is in truth a heterogeneous party, including in its ranks Catholics and protestants; landlords and sons of peasants; brilliant lawyers like Mr. Healy; journalists like the late Mr. Gray of the *Freeman*, like Mr. Justin MacCarthy, who was also a historian and a dramatist, or like Mr. T. P. O'Connor of to-day. The party had a poet, also, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, the author of so many popular ballads, the most celebrated of which, "God Save Ireland," was sung in the writer's ears in the Dublin streets, the day after it had appeared in the *Nation*. It has included a former Prime Minister of Canada, the Hon. Edward Blake. A few years ago it had two ex-Fenians, Mr. Davitt and Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, who are both now dead, not to speak of a number of political ex-prisoners. Eccentric and original types have not been lacking, from the O'Gorman Mahon and Biggar, the pork merchant, to that descendant of Swift, Mr. Swift MacNeill, "who indeed," wrote an Englishman a short while ago, "typifies the party to which he belongs. Now it is wild and unmanagable, now it is bitterly belligerent, now it is recklessly rowdy. But in Parliamentary methods and precedents it is always acutely informed, industrious and hardworking, and in private life, gay, merrymaking. . ."[5]

What they lack least is eloquence, a facile and brilliant eloquence, though sometimes verbose and spoiled by bad taste, and they expend it freely. But they plead the Irish cause in the House of Commons in a tone relatively pale and moderate compared to that which they employ before an Irish crowd, or to the semi-revolutionary speeches which they reserve for America. They are past masters of Parliamentary practice, and were among the first to make the best use of the "questions" put to Ministers at the opening of the sittings—a convenient method of unveiling local abuses and of making the small official who is irresponsible at law feel that he is responsible in fact. The House, unfortunately, has not

5 *Daily News*, 28th August, 1901.

the time to occupy itself seriously with the Sister Isle, and with difficulty devotes three or four days a year to the Irish Budget. Great speeches and fiery declamation are received with shrugs, or in impatient silence, if not by precipitate departures. Then the Irish, half out of anger, and half out of calculation, proceed to avenge their powerlessness by violence and obstruction.

Irish obstruction at Westminster had its day of fame when Parnell, taking the weapon from the rough hands of Biggar, and turning to profit the deficiencies of the old rules of the House, showed such skill in covering the order-paper with motions, prolonging speeches and sittings, wearying the patience and killing the time of Parliament that for a moment he paralysed the constitutional life of the country. His object was to make the work of Parliament impossible, as the object of the League in Ireland was to make Government impossible. England had destroyed the Irish Parliament. Well, Ireland would destroy the English Parliament! She prevented Ireland from conducting her affairs, Ireland would return the compliment. The game, however, could last only for a time. As soon as Parliament had amended its procedure, and strengthened the powers of the Speaker and the Chairmen, it disappeared, to be replaced by practices of violence, and by "scenes" sometimes justified, though often unjustifiable, the object of which was simply to degrade an assembly that could not be mastered. Members were expelled by the police; refused *en masse* to vote [6]; insulted Ministers; spued out their hatred into the face of England. During the South African war it was a savoury pleasure to the Nationalists to applaud English disasters, and to shout "Hurrah for the Boers!" as they had formerly shouted "Hurrah for the Mahdi!" Vengeance is sweet to the conquered; and something had to be done to strike the imagination of the electors, and stimulate the generosity of the Irish-Americans.

6 Voting was till recently obligatory for the members present at a sitting.

All this violence and provocation exasperate the English, although they, on their side, do all that could be done to let loose the explosion. What irritates them most of all is the element of trouble introduced into their Parliamentary life, even in normal times, and apart altogether from obstruction, by the existence at Westminster of a united and independent parliamentary group of 75 to 80 members, who are free from all alliances with English parties, and personally insensible to the favours of Government, and who proclaim loudly that they are there only under constraint of an Act of Union the validity of which they deny. "We are in Parliament," say the Irish Members, "we are not of it." Faced by a strong Government with a large majority behind it, such a group cannot do much harm. When, on the other hand, Whigs and Tories are divided in almost equal numbers, it becomes the arbiter of the situation, throwing its vote at pleasure now to the one side of the scale, now to the other. This is Parnell's ideal condition ; when it exists, Ireland must be close-fisted, and cautiously weigh the concessions and the sincerity of each party. Thus in 1885-86 Parnell created a Conservative Government, only to overthrow it six months afterwards, swearing, a little too late, that he would never again trust the fine promises of a Lord Randolph Churchill and a Lord Carnarvon. The Tories, when they are sincere, have, from the Irish point of view, the advantage of controlling the Lords and being able to make them pass a measure which, if it came from the Liberals, would be rejected. The Liberals, on the other hand, have, in the majority, accepted the Home Rule principle, and hence it was that the Irish party kept them in power from 1892 to 1895, and still actually supports them, though ready to make war on them, should they betray their promises.

If these concessions and combinations only affected Irish interests, the English might overlook the unpleasantness of the situation, although in practice it brings little honour to either of their great parties. But what when

they are exercised on purely British affairs? Irish intervention in British politics has always had a democratic influence. In Lecky's words: "The majority of Irish Members turned the balance in favour of the great democratic reform of 1832, and from that day there has been scarcely any democratic measure which they have not powerfully assisted . . . . . It is probably not too much to say that their presence in the British Parliament has proved the most powerful of all agents in accelerating the democratic transformation of our English politics."[7] The Irish are always proud to remember that they resisted the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, that they abolished flogging in the army, and that they constituted, under the Tory Government of 1895 to 1905, the only serious and steady opposition to the Imperialist majority. Nevertheless, their intervention and influence, has, in the nature of things, done much to hurt British politics. It is the sad result of a false situation that they have done more harm to England than good to Ireland. They have introduced into political morals a system of compromise and of bargain. By their example they have provoked, in the heart of Parliament, the formation of coalitions of interest, and of groups formed after their image, the existence of which is a serious menace to parliamentary institutions.[8] In short, it is easy to understand how the English are galled at the sight of the Irish, when the balance of parties allows it, erecting themselves into the arbiters of situations which exclusively concern Britain; at the spectacle of their Parliament sometimes led and governed by a party which strives only to dishonour it, and loses no opportunity of proclaiming its hatred of England.

Here, we think, is to be sought the profound cause of English hostility towards the Irish Party in Parliament.

7 *England in the 18th Century*, viii., 483.

8 The fact is stated by Mr. T. W. Russell in *Ireland and the Empire*, London, 1901, p. 243, 244. Twenty years ago railway groups, marine merchant groups, beer groups, etc., were unknown.

England forced the Union upon Ireland, and now she herself is suffering the consequences. One remedy offers itself, outside of the entire suppression of Irish representation at Westminster, the reduction of its members by a Redistribution Bill. Proposed by Lord Salisbury in 1884, the measure has since remained on the programme of the Conservative Party, and indeed constitutes that Party's sole solution of the Irish difficulty. England, it is said, has one member for every 67,527 inhabitants; Scotland one for every 62,112; Ireland one for every 43,289. The injustice is apparent. The strength of the Irish representation must be reduced in proportion to the population; that is to say, to 70 or 75 members instead of 103. Doubtless the Treaty of Union fixed once for all the number of Irish seats in Parliament; [9] but the objection is valueless since the pact has been violated already by the Disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1869. Let us admit the thesis, is the answer. But what right have the Unionists to put forward the decline of Irish population as a reason for reducing Irish representation? At the time in the last century when the Irish population had doubled, they refused to consider the question of increasing that representation. And even if it were reduced to 50 or 60 members, does anyone think that the Nationalist Party will find much more difficulty in fettering the Parliamentary machine, or that the English parties will no longer be tempted to pay court to it?

IV.—Nationalist Policy.

English opinion is severe—unjustly severe—on the politicians of Ireland, on these "professional agitators" who, they say, do not represent their country but betray it, who seek not for reforms but for useful grievances,

9 The Act of Union fixed the number at 100. The Act of 1832 added five seats, but two boroughs were disfranchised.

who trade upon the ignorance and misery of the excitable masses, and exploit their passions with impunity. The impartial observer must refuse to accept this extravagant and self-interested judgment, and must observe that despite their faults and their failings, their intolerant orthodoxy, their hateful dissensions, their excesses and insufficiencies—and Ireland takes note of all these things—they have behind them and with them the great body of the people. Whether they are or are not "gentlemen" of the British type, whether they are or are not professional politicians, living on their profession, is all beside the real question. The question is, what sort of politics have they given to Ireland in the twenty-five years during which they have controlled her public life?

We must recognise at the outset the exceptional and, indeed, unique difficulty of the situation, the isolation and weakness of Irish Nationalism. On one side they are faced with the all-powerful Celtophobia of England, on the other with a "Garrison" clinging desperately to its privileges. Ulster lies in the abyss of fanaticism; to their right are the renegades preaching their gospel of desertion, on their left the convinced Separatists boasting of the futility of the constitutional battle. The leaders, it must be recognised, have in this situation firmly upheld the principles, the rights, and the flag of Ireland, and have never lowered their policy to the final humiliation, nor accepted servitude. This is, after all, no empty record.

They have been without fear. Have they been without reproach? Consider what they are: the representatives of a democracy that is in its birth throes, and not yet socially formed or developed; like it, they are, being Irishmen, excitable and passionate; and they are, like it, more often than not, deficient in that higher culture which carries with it sound judgment and a philosophical view of things. Hence their inclination to let the spirit of hatred and vengeance get the better of the practical and business spirit in the conduct of affairs. They make

it a point of honour to irritate English Celtophobia instead of striving to soften it, and at times it would even seem as though their whole policy were based on and were exhausting itself in vain demonstrations of anti-British feeling. Hatred is not only wrong in itself, but it is sterile. It is a policy that may be left to the extremists. Whoever accepts a seat in Parliament should have a Parliamentary policy. Those who are oath-bound to the constitution would better safeguard their dignity and serve the interests of their country by an attitude of cold reserve.

This offensive ferocity always characterises their relations with the Government. They miss opportunities of *rapprochment*[1]; when the battle is fought they cannot answer conciliation by conciliation. Parnell gave the example in 1881 when he opposed Gladstone's great Land Bill. Is it not better politics to accept, when one can do so without loss of principle, every conciliatory measure, even though it is inadequate? Intransigeance is but a lazy sophism, which dispenses public men from reflection and responsibility. They have forgotten somewhat that perfection is not to be found here below, and that the real world is made up of compromises and half-satisfactions. Their politics lack realism. Carried away by the ardour of battle, and under the incessant provocation of English Celtophobia and Irish wretchedness, they are guided in their politics by passion rather than by interest. And yet, when all is said, can we expect from these Irishmen the calm mastery and the philosophical detachment of a Bryce or a Morley?

The gravest feature of the situation, however, is that they have seen the Irish question as one merely of politics, and that politics means for them only agitation and Home Rule. They seem to have scarcely any conception of

[1] Mr. William O Brien, in 1902, with Mr. Redmond, initiated the movement of conciliation which, through the Land Conference, resulted in the Land Act of 1903. He has since continued, alone and outside the ranks of the official party, to preach conciliation in answer to conciliation.

the complexity of social life. They have neglected the intellectual, moral and economic progress of the country, and the education of the democracy. In their eyes England is responsible for every evil. It is from England that every reform must come, and in Irish autonomy alone lies salvation. Under Home Rule everything will prosper, without it nothing can prosper! Perish Ireland so long as the principle of Home Rule survives! And they do not refrain from promising this Home Rule to the country in the near future, next year—who knows?—or, perhaps, even to-morrow . . . . . or from boasting of their oratorical successes, and all in an exaggerated fashion of speech that ill conceals the inadequacy of the results obtained. Thus they flatter the country by tempting it into premature hopes, and into the apathy of a vain expectation. As for themselves, they flutter in the void, and allow themselves to be absorbed by this sterile if not destructive agitation. Agitation is a necessary evil, since England has never yielded except to force, but it is none the less an evil; and they have not repaired it by an attempt at reconstruction. Whenever fruitful initiative has arisen near them they have shown themselves jealous of it or have set it aside. To work for the economic uplifting of Ireland is to menace the cause of Home Rule.[2] To organise agricultural co-operation is useless, and even harmful, until the Land Question has been settled.[3] They have made no effort to rally Ulster or the oligarchy to the cause of Home Rule. Absorbed in the Parliamentary struggle, they have not understood that effort from within can and should favour and forward, outside politics, a national regeneration which Parliament itself is incapable of assuring to the country. In short they have reduced Nationalism, as the "Colony" for their part have reduced Unionism, to a negative rather

[2] In 1896 Mr. MacCarthy, the anti-Parnellite leader, refused to take part in the Recess Committee organised by Sir Horace Plunkett.

[3] The usual argument of the Nationalists against the agricultural societies founded by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society.

than a positive policy. Their ideas and achievements have been those of politicians rather than of statesmen. Ill-prepared by education for an extraordinarily difficult task, and badly supported by a changeable and inexperienced public opinion, they have rarely risen to high or long views. Condemned to perpetual opposition, they have never been moulded by the exercise of power, experience of affairs, or the burden of responsibility. In Parliament they are never consulted ; and in Ireland even, until quite lately, they were but little checked or criticised. At the present time a change is coming over the Irish spirit ; there is an awakening of public opinion. In England a wave of Liberalism is arising which disposes her towards concessions. The new era makes it necessary that this negative policy should become positive, should grow to maturity, and become at once more responsible and more realistic. Otherwise the ineffectiveness of Constitutional Nationalism may well one day provoke, if indeed it has not already begun to provoke, a recrudescence of the extremist and separatist party.

CHAPTER III.—THE NATIONAL AND ANTI-ENGLISH SPIRIT

Between the two Irelands, between the conquerors and the conquered, the Anglo-Saxon colony and the Irish democracy, there is not, as might be thought, an indestructible stone-wall, an impenetrable and water-tight partition which cuts off all relations between them. There are no hostilities so violent, but they must be mildened here and there by many centuries of life in common; personal sympathies develop between those who are separated by religion or interest. There is no doubt that in Ulster the two castes, owing to their numerical equality, still live deeply divided lives. Moreover, the political downfall of the Ascendancy and the accession to power of National Ireland have inevitably left some rancour in the heart of the "Anglican" garrison. Still it is not rare to find Unionists given seats on the District and County Councils by Nationalist electors, or to find the names of Protestants on subscription lists for the erection of Catholic churches. Even as between landlords and tenants there are many current anecdotes which show that relations are not always those of enemies under arms.

The facts can be better understood when it is realised that the psychological differences between individuals of the one class and the other are much less than the surface of things might suggest. Whether they wished it or not, Ireland has made them all her own. She has set her mark on every Irishman, be he Protestant or Catholic, Nationalist or Unionist, willing or unwilling. The students of Trinity College who demonstrate in the

streets of Dublin, the Orangemen who fight with the Belfast police, have no cause either to envy or to reproach the peasantry of the West, who light candles in their windows to welcome their member on his release from prison. Climate, surroundings, circumstances, all these forces unite in bringing together what ethnic differences seemed to have finally divided. They have, with the help of the old Celtic blood, contributed to form a national character, which is essentially different from that of the Sister Isle. Although England's racial origins are not very dissimilar, no two human types are, at the present day, more opposed, psychologically speaking, than the Englishman and the Irishman, and this despite all that England has received from Celtic sources, and all that Ireland, in the course of her Anglicisation, has borrowed from British civilisation.

The character of a people is essentially a composite product. Race, climate, milieu, history, all have their share in shaping it. There is not to be found anywhere in the world a race of absolutely pure blood, any more than there is to be found a nation consisting of a single race. On the other hand, there is no people so disinherited of their first nature, or so humiliated by life, that they do not respond to certain ethnic traits and tendencies. This is nowhere seen more clearly than in Ireland, and yet nowhere have there been so many false and exaggerated theories on the subject. The English Celtophobes, following the example of Mommsen, impute all the vices and troubles of Ireland to the Celtic race. Yet, did not Sir John Davies, so early even as the seventeenth century, compute that the number of the descendants of the Saxons in Ireland exceeded that of the descendants of the Gaels ? And there was very little homogeneity in the Gaelic race itself, which contained a large admixture of the former inhabitants of Ireland, just as the newcomers merged at once in it. On the other hand, an English writer of talent, Mr. J. M. Robertson, M.P., denies that race has any share whatsoever in the development of

national character. He has written a book [1] to combat the anti-Celtic prejudice that explains everything by race. The political history of Ireland would have been the same, he says, given the same conditions, with any other race as it has been with the Irish race. This makes it difficult to explain how we find in the Irish character of to-day so many traits which belonged to the Gaels in the sixth and seventh centuries, traits that were acquired, definite, and independent of the moment, such, if you will, as great power of imagination and of sentiment, or religious ardour. These characteristics were so deeply graved on the Irish mind that their traces are to be recognised in it from the most primitive times, and persist to our own day, despite all the modifications and developments of subsequent history. Surely it is as great an exaggeration to deny all racial influence on the psychology of a people as to attribute everything to it. The truth is that in the analysis of national character we must take into consideration every fact, ethnic, historical and social. In practice, however, it must be recognised as impossible to determine scientifically the actual influence of any one of these forces. Nothing is more complex, it may be said at once, than the Irish national character, just because it is the outcome of so many varied forces. Physically, there is no dominant type that one can seize upon. The Irishman is tall as a rule, taller than the Englishman ; the largeness of the jaw, the protuberant cheek-bones, signs supposed to be characteristic, cannot be said to be of frequent occurrence. Fair hair is quite as common as dark ; black eyes as blue. Many of the faces one sees are rough, coarse, and vulgar in expression, bearing the marks of slavery and idleness ; on the other hand, many peasants and people of the middle class, also, who have behind them some generations of culture, manifest a delicacy and spirituality of expression which is quite remarkable and to which English beauty does not often attain. Psychologically,

[1] *The Saxon and the Celt*, London, 1897, p. 157.

the variety is not less. Here then we may content ourselves with indicating some general traits of a national character which are modified in practice by a thousand causes, class, religion, occupation, not to speak of the great modern fact of Anglicisation.

I.—The Individual.

What strikes one from the first, in the intellectual domain, is the facility and swiftness of the Irish mind. This characteristic would not seem to be specifically "Celtic," for we find it neither in the Bretons nor in the Welsh. In any case, however, it is a quality directly in contrast to the slow-mindedness of the Anglo-Saxon. The Englishman, it is said, has just grasped an idea when the Irishman has passed on to the next. The "Saxon" will painfully connect two arguments; the Irish "Celt" holds them both in his mind, as it were, upon the same line. His rapidity of perception and repartee is equalled and aided by a swift memory. In England an audience follows an orator from afar; here it is ahead of him, guesses his thought in advance, and notes every lightest "hit" with instantaneous laughter and shoutings. On the other hand, this intellectual agility rushes the Irishman to extremes and prevents him from appreciating the golden mean. He leaps at one bound the whole width of an idea; he exaggerates it, and then changes his mind; he is mobile and extravagant. Still swiftness of mind connotes not only accessibility to ideas and adaptability, but imaginative power, and even in eminent cases, that supreme gift which is greater than imagination, that insight or intuition which is the gift of poets and of thinkers. The poetic richness of the Irish in former times is well known. Naturally vigorous, positive and clear, like the French, though, perhaps, less methodical, in so far as it has been less moulded by Latin influence, the Irish mind is especially adapted,

says a critic,[2] "for the speculative in philosophy and the abstract in science."

If the harshness of circumstance has prevented it from developing to its full stature, it possesses at least one incontestable talent, that of oratory and literature. "The Irish orator or writer is fluent, musical and graphic; he engages the eye, he delights the ear and strikes the imagination at least as much as he takes possession of the intelligence. Hence the music of his periods, the vitality of his illustrations, the brightness of atmosphere, the high spirits, and personality expressed in every turn."[3] Whether he be a writer or not by profession, the Irishman spontaneously puts all his individuality into his style; he has the taste for expression, for colour, for that thing which is so rare in English, the period; he is a perfect master of the language that has been forced upon him, and uses it with an art and a brilliancy which are altogether French.

In the order of emotion there is the same susceptibility, the same impressionability of the psychological instrument. Sentiment, spirituality, mysticism—that general characteristic of the Celt—appears in the productions of primitive Ireland, not only in the songs and the marvellous art-work of the first Christian ages, but in the epics or Sagas of the pagan period, in which tenderness and idealism are strangely allied to the rude realism of the time. These Celtic qualities of heart are to be found equally in the Irish "Celts" of to-day. They are pious with a piety delicate, childlike, and they have not their like in Europe for purity of morals, and domestic virtue. Love of country is rooted profoundly in their hearts, an unhappy virtue for those who are predestined to be emigrants. "I have earned big money in America and Australia, but I only existed in these countries, while I lived every hour of my life in Ireland," said a returned

[2] Mrs. Sophie Bryant, *The Celtic Mind* (*Contemporary Review*, 1897, p. 533, *et seq.*), an article full of ideas and of profound insight, from which we have adopted many suggestions.

[3] *Ib.* p. 543.

emigrant. The less the Irish mind has been tainted by Anglicisation the more delicate is its emotional life ; the egotism of the Anglicised peasant of the East is all but unknown in the West. "You get nothing out of an Irishman by taking him brusquely," writes a traveller very justly, "and you can get anything by taking him gently . . . . . A mere nothing repels him, and a mere nothing electrifies him." [4]

It is one of the great mistakes made by the English that they have always rubbed the conquered people the wrong way by their sour and imperious manners. It is well that the Irish have the power to despise and banish reality when it is hard and sad, and are able to fall back upon that inner life which is truer for them than the other, to forget themselves in dreams, in memories of the past, in visions of the Beyond. In every peasant of Kerry and of Connaught, there is a poet who sings—or at least listens to the song of traditional voices—of the beauty of nature, of the glory of the love of God, of the fairy chimeras, the *Sidhe*,[5] of supernatural beings. People came to Arran from afar to hear Bryan Gilmartin or Coleman Costello recite the old poems. At the other end of society, there is a group of idealistic poets, Lionel Johnson, G. W. Russell (A.E.), W. B. Yeats, and others, who seek inspiration in symbolical mysticism or in dreams of the invisible world.

But withal there is no obstinate sadness, no invincible timidity. Those famous traits of the Celtic race, as Renan has seen it, do not make themselves manifest ; we do not encounter men "with all the faults and all the qualities of the solitary man, who is at the same time proud and timid, awkward in manner . . . . and ignorant of that singular forgetfulness of human conditions and destinies which is called gaiety." [6] Has the Irish soul

4 Daryl, *Les Anglais en Irlande*, Paris, 1888, p. 109.

5 The belief in spirits, fairies, visitors from the other world, is still very prevalent in the West of Ireland.

6 *La Poésie des Races Celtiques* (Essais de Morale et de Critique), Paris, 1859, p. 381, 383.

ever been of this kind ? Present-day Ireland, doubtless, is no longer the Ireland which existed before the Great Famine, gay and careless, brilliant and reckless, with a touch of Bohemianism, devoted to the duel, to feasts and to fighting—the Ireland painted by Miss Edgeworth and Charles Lever. But is she any nearer to the concentrated melancholy of the " pays d'Armor." Light and fantastic, she retains, after many a drama and disaster, as much vivacity of character as of mind. She has unfailing verve, an ardent need to display and to project herself, the sense and instinct of *fun*, that is to say, of joke, of unwounding and familiar drollery. People say that her humour is dying out. But I do not know many salons where raillery, repartee, and a biting brilliance are more in honour than in certain Dublin drawingrooms ; and I know of nothing more charming in the way of spiritual finesse than the speeches with which the Cardinal Primate is wont to regale his auditors at Maynooth and elsewhere. The peasants of the West, grave, as all men are who live close to the earth, put a reserve over their joviality. But in the towns it flashes forth : the Irish are, one would say, the Southerners of the North ; to see the popular exuberance and volubility of a Dublin crowd, the *far niente* of the gamins sitting around Nelson's Pillar, is to be reminded of the *lazzaroni* of Santa Lucia. It is not only in poetry that the Celt of Ireland loves and seeks out adventure and battle, but in reality also, as when in the battlefield of politics, he passes from strong words to fisticuffs, or when, in the British uniform, he fights England's battles in South Africa. Emotional, excitable and changeable, he is and will remain a creature of impulse until something is done to develop and discipline his character. " Dear me ! What a mercurial race we are, and how the mercury runs up and down in the barometer of our human hearts ! " [7] Nowhere is the correspondence more striking between man and climate than under this mutable and shifting sky ; with its

7 *My New Curate*, by Canon Sheehan, p. 156.

constant changes of weather, its alternation of dreadful tempests which drown everything in a moment, and the end of which can only be awaited with patience since all struggle is vain, and of beautiful bursts of sunshine which fill the eyes with joy and the heart with hope, when the storms are forgotten and life becomes easy and pleasant again. "All the faults and all the qualities of the solitary man," said Renan. But no one is more dominated by the social instinct, the need for society, than the Celt of Ireland. The Englishman does not fear solitude; the Irishman loves company and needs contact with his kind. "Better be quarrelling than be lonesome," says the proverb! The peasant of Ireland finds nothing so good as those long evenings, passed under his own roof or a neighbour's, round the turf fire which badly lights up his blackened cottage, and where he talks not only of politics but of the past, of absent friends, of the invisible beings, the "good people," the fairies. With the passing stranger he is affable and dignified, neither awkward nor familiar. Thackeray, though he did not love Ireland, could not when he was travelling there in 1843 help noting, in his *Irish Sketch Book*, the easy manners of these "gentlemen of high and low rank, men shrewd and delicate of perception, observant of society, entering into the feelings of others, and anxious to set them at ease and gratify them . . . . . I wish in England we were a little more complimentary." The rough and curt manner of the ill-educated American might have been expected since that time to have made its influence felt in Ireland, yet the traveller is still struck, above all in the West, by the instinctive urbanity and natural grace of that old race of peasants who are born noblemen, and beside whom the English yokel is a thick-skinned and stupid boor. They cling to one another and help one another in times of famine. They even abuse, by times, the best virtues of the heart: from weakness and fear of unpopularity the Justice of the Peace will sometimes not venture to refuse a "licence" to his

neighbour; a jury will not convict an acquaintance. There is another trait that proceeds from the same type of temperament. "What the Irishman is really attached to in Ireland," says Sir Horace Plunkett, "is not a home but a social order—the pleasant amenities, the courtesies, the leisureliness, the associations of religion, and the familiar faces of his neighbours, whose ways and minds are like his and very unlike those of any other people—these are the things to which he clings in Ireland, and which he remembers in exile." [8] For the Englishman, "home" means his own comfortable and independent corner: *ubi bene ibi patria*. For the Irishman it means, besides the cottage of his birth, his traditional and familiar surroundings, his environment. What to the one is a physical fact is to the other a social fact. The one says "chez moi," and the other, as we French do, says "chez nous."

Are we to regard this, as has often been suggested, as a survival of the old clan spirit? "In no other race," Renan has justly said, "is the tie of blood so strong; nowhere has it created more duties, nowhere has it attached man to his like so widely and so deeply. . . . . It is a widespread belief in this country (Brittany) that blood speaks." [9] Politically speaking, the clans have disappeared since Cromwell. The only relics of those primitive social forms are to be found in some curious and isolated instances, such as that fisher community of the Galway Claddagh, which has its own laws, king and customs, and where it would be rash to call in the police or invoke the Courts of Justice. At certain times it is not uncommon to see all the Coffeys, for instance, or all the Joyces, voting together at an election. The family

8 *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 54. It must not be concluded that the Irish peasant does not love his cottage and his field with passion If he does not expend as much care and trouble as the French peasant, on making his cottage comfortable, clean, and gay, it is but the consequence of insecurity of tenure. (*Cf.* on the life of the peasant, the Irish home, the celebrated romance of Kickham, entitled *Knocknagow*).

9 *Op. cit.*, p. 381.

has here remained the social unit. When a son succeeds his father he inherits not in his own behalf but in that of the family. In the West the English civil law which has been officially sovereign for the last three centuries remains more often than not a dead letter : it has neither suppressed nor supplanted custom ; and nine times out of ten by this custom it is not the children who inherit from their father but the widow from her husband. Out of the same spirit arise those local divisions and jealousies, those boycotts and vendettas, which last from generation to generation. More often than not, say the Irish themselves, we go in groups, in cliques, in separate leagues ; with us individualism has not yet come forth from its Limbo, and the community is still the dominant fact. Any singularity in any person in this homogeneous circle, any appearance of superiority in one member over another, is looked upon with disfavour. There are no innovations, no eagerness for progress, for that would show a lack of respect for one's neighbour. The sense of equality keeps the people conservative.

It is interesting to compare Irish and English from the social point of view. The Englishman is, of all Western people the most individualistic ; he respects the social hierarchy, not only because he is indifferent to the lives and the opinions of others, but because he is strong, and feels himself capable of climbing the steps of this hierarchy. He is more attached to liberty, which is a thing, than to equality, which is a word, or at all events, a completely relative expression. The Irishman, on the contrary, is above all things democratic, and, like the Frenchman, is less devoted to liberty than to equality. He desires progress not for the isolated individual (who is too feeble to achieve it for himself), but for classes, for social strata, for the community. He protests against English oppression because it is foreign, but nevertheless, he endures in his own immediate life petty local tyrannies, like those, among others, of the League Committees, because he has not the energy and force of

the individualistic temperament, which would be necessary to make himself respected; were he leader himself he would be authoritative and hard, after the manner of the workman become master. He is in ordinary life a conservative, though quick enough to revolt if things go badly. There is no greater temptation for the son of a big farmer than to go into the police, and no greater pleasure for his brothers than to "batter" the police upon occasion. What, in short, is all this if not the result of arrested evolution of that factor of modern life, which is the token of a healthy and prosperous society, Individualism?

II.—The Effect of the Past.

What is the cause of this arrest in the social development of Ireland? Manifestly it is to be sought in Irish history as England has been making it for the last seven centuries—seven centuries of raids, of warfare, of massacre, of invasion and of persecution. It needs an effort to realise the frightful and destructive influence of such a past upon the soul of Ireland. At the end of the seventeenth century, when the race was already worn out by that long sequence of horrors which stretches from Elizabeth to Cromwell and William III., came the Penal Laws under which she fell, as a Protestant[1] writer has said, to the lowest degree possible to humanity.

Poverty and ignorance were decreed by law; the son was incited to betray the father, and the flock to denounce the shepherd. When, a century later, they were repealed, they left their effects behind. They had not weaned Ireland from her religion, but they had made her a slave, with the weaknesses and the vices of a slave. Backs were bent, and characters demoralised. The effect remained, and it endures. It still endures, for oppression endures, that political, economic, social, and intellectual

[1] Ball, *The Reformed Church in Ireland*, London, 1886, p. 164.

oppression which, in the last fifty years, has driven half her population out of Ireland, and added a fresh source of decay to those which existed. Ireland to-day is only beginning to raise herself up and to re-make her soul. What has she been doing for a century and a half? She has "gone the pace," it might be said. She has used up all her strength merely in living, and had none left for the task of reformation and advance. Is it not true, as has been said, that success brings to light the qualities of a people, and misfortune their failings? [2] This is why the faults of the Irish are so difficult to distinguish from their misfortunes.

The Irishman, it is said, is untruthful and perfidious, cruel and vindictive, reckless and ungovernable, and devoid of respect for justice or law. May this not be because until quite recently he has had no justice done him, no law but that which was used to his hurt? This oppression would engender in him dissimulation, the spirit of vengeance and of anarchy, as poverty engenders vice. He is quarrelsome and jealous, always a prey to dissensions, always ready to betray! It was an Irishman, MacMurrough, who invited the English to Ireland. There is a proverb that if you put an Irishman on the spit you will always find another to turn it. But what vanquished nation has ever escaped the curse of civil war? Moreover, what has England left undone that she could do to divide and corrupt the Irish? [3]

Reckless and idle, without dignity or mastery of self, they lack energy in their practical life, and character in their moral life—this is the great reproach most commonly directed against them, as it is also the point in which the effect of their past is best manifested in them. Beyond doubt there must be some quality in this damp

[2] See the *New Ireland Review*, July to December, 1901. *Letters from Ireland*, by H. B.

[3] "We were reckless, ignorant, improvident, drunken and idle. We were idle, for we had nothing to do; we were reckless, for we had no hope; we were ignorant, for learning was denied us; we were improvident, for we had no future; we were drunken, for we sought to forget our misery." (Sir R. Kane, *Industrial Resources of Ireland*).

and soft climate, this "sedative, soporific" air,[4] which depresses and enervates the mind. It helps to explain those easy-going manners and ways of taking life, that strength of endurance but not of enterprise, that occasional capacity for the most vigorous effort which is accompanied in the ordinary course of things by an extreme lack of perseverance, that lazy and indolent dilletantism which is found among the most cultivated men, that lack of nervous energy, in short, for which but a poor compensation is to be found in spasmodic, nervous outbursts, and which contrasts sharply with the less brilliant but more steady, energetic and regular temperament of the Anglo-Saxon.[5] But none the less there is no doubt that oppression has singularly aggravated the evil; the Penal Laws proscribed effort by taking away the end and the reward of effort; and even to-day the English regime closes the path of progess to the Irish. Take the case of the peasant. He is idle and negligent; he is a bad farmer and would rather, where he can, have his land in pasture than in tillage, because pasture means less trouble—indeed in certain rich districts the art of tillage has been almost completely unlearned. But this is because during the centuries others have reaped what he had sown; it is because the fruit of his work has always been confiscated by the landlord. "Why sleepest thou, Moujick?"[6] How that plaintive song of the Slavs might be applied to the Irish peasant! If the Irish moujick sleeps, it is because poverty has become natural to him and he has lost ambition for better things, If his cottage is dirty and badly kept, with the dung-hill before the door, the pig under the same roof as his master, and not a flower to rejoice the eye, it is because to-day, despite all the laws that have been passed, his improvements would often increase his rent.[7] "I have no

4 *My New Curate*, p. 198.

5 Old chronicles say that persistence in work was formerly a racial characteristic among the Irish. (*Cf.* de Beaumont, *op. cit.* I., 353.

6 A. Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Empire des Tsars et les Russes*, I., 138.

7 See below, *The Land Question.*

doubt," wrote Sir G. C. Lewis, "that a Protestant German peasantry, if properly oppressed and brutalised, would be made as bad as the Irish."[8] The same applies, and for the same reason, to the country or city worker. There is a wrong spirit abroad which borders on dishonesty if it does not reach to it. People work hard when their master's eye is upon them, but when he has gone they sing, or go for a walk. As a result of lack of training as much as of lack of energy, they take a day to do what a good American workman would finish in an hour. "What a pity," writes an American, contrasting the habits of workers in the two countries,[9] "that people should have to go to America to learn so elementary a lesson as that of work." From top to bottom of the scale, initiative, the practical spirit, the sense of order and accuracy, have been obliterated by lack of usage as well as by lack of education, and they are only beginning to be recovered. There is plenty of good-will but little will. Work is spasmodic, not systematic. Circumstances are not exacting, and people are content with little—"That will do!" How many industries and businesses have failed through lack of method and of care! In England "Irish" has become synonymous with "bad." Good "managers" are rare; negligence, carelessness, bungling are supreme in the domestic economy among the peasantry as among the upper classes. People are close in little, and extravagant in big things; "penny wise and pound foolish."

Morally speaking, then, while the Irishman is no longer a slave, he has still something of the slave in him, or at best of the freed bondsman. He is hardly able to rid himself of that sense of inferiority which his old masters have so strongly inculcated in him. To his former oppressor he often shows a remnant of servility, unless, indeed, by reaction he may affect a tone of aggravated rudeness like that old peasant of whom Mr. William

[8] Quoted by Sir C. G. Duffy in *Young Ireland*.
[9] *New Ireland Review*, 1901. (*Letters from Ireland*).

O'Brien speaks, who, hearing the insolence of land agents in the past recalled, replied, "Begob, we'll have them put their hands to their hats for us yet."[10] As concerns himself he has retained from his servitude a certain lack of dignity, of moral discipline, of self-mastery and self-respect. "Hence," said Gustave de Beaumont[11] in 1835, "that deplorable negligence, that lack of neatness . . . that *laisser aller*, that carelessness of his person, that total absence of self-respect and personality, which are direct results of his former condition." A fine talker, but devoid of the critical sense, vaunting and verbose, he will often make himself ridiculous without being aware of it. Full of physical courage, he is often deficient in moral courage; he lacks confidence in himself, initiative, and energy, and has lost the habit of looking things in the face. He quails before responsibilities, and has forgotten how to will, for his soul is still a serf. "Don't cheer the Boers, but imitate them!" was the advice which Mr. William O'Brien could not resist tendering to his countrymen not long ago. This is all the product of the past, the work of servitude and poverty, prolonged by oppression, and—we shall return to the point later—by the Anglicisation of Ireland, and the inadequacy of the school system. It makes up an *ensemble* of faults rather than of vices, and of sins of omission rather than sins of commission. In few countries are morals purer, in few is "character" less developed. Other peoples, as it has been said, have the qualities necessary for this world, the Irish have the qualities which are needed for the other. "Though the catalogue of Irish faults seems trivial as compared with the vices of other nations," a critic remarked a little while ago,[12] "their grave disadvantage lies in the fact that they are those which go to make bad citizens. The defects of the Irish are not deadly sins. But," he adds jocularly, "as the world is constituted, a few deadly

[10] *Irish Ideas*, p. 25.
[11] *Op. cit.*, I., 356.
[12] *New Ireland Review*, September, 1901.

sins, masked by a little discreet hypocrisy, might prove less detrimental to the sinner's prospects here below."

III.—Public Life and Public Opinion.

Of Irish public opinion the best that one can say is that, emerging as it is from childhood, it is as yet hardly emancipated, and shows in any event a great lack of education and experience. Left without any guidance or support beyond that of a very small number of independent men, it has all the naivete and thoughtlessness of youth, all its enthusiasms and illusions. It is careless and ignorant; so that on such grave questions as that of education it remains silent. It has, too, the intolerance of youth; it lacks the critical sense, and is impatient of all criticism. People do not discuss, but dispute, they exchange insults but do not argue, or examine their consciences. They are lost in regrets for the past, and are never done with the historical grievances of Ireland: every misfortune of the present day is imputed to England, as if it were an insult to patriotism to suppose that the Irish could have faults. The outlook is obscured by prejudices, passions, and childish trivialities, in the midst of which the good sense of the people can only struggle painfully along. The Government is at once denounced, and asked for alms. England is hated, and imitated. Everyone is ready with his diagnosis of the evil and his special panacea. It is the triumph of empty rhetoric and fine phrases. The cry goes up, "Long live the Boers!" but they are not imitated, whatever Mr. William O'Brien may say. People shout *God save Ireland*! *Ireland a Nation*! and when they have shouted themselves hoarse their consciences are at rest and they return home. It is easy to understand how it is that the utilitarians and the realists turn to where life and success are real, that is, to the service of the Government; while the idealists

and the disillusioned fall back in desperation upon the most intransigeant separatism.

The Press, like the politicians, helps to keep Ireland in this wordy agitation and this destructive rhetoric. The Irishman, it is said, is a born politician ; he is, above all, a born journalist. He has all the qualities of the profession, ease, spirit, and verve ; and Ireland furnishes a good part of the *personnel* of the British press, even of the anti-Irish section of it. We do not speak here of the local press, which is lamentable. In the great Dublin journals there is, at the same time, more talent and less seriousness and variety of interest than in the English press. Nationalist or Unionist, Irish journalism is party journalism. Unskilled in calm and fruitful discussion, it loves violence and insult. It ignores, when it cannot destroy, strong adversaries and disagreeable facts. There were once (without even going as far back as the *Nation*) newspapers which tried to form public opinion ; men like Dwyer Gray, formerly editor of the *Freeman*, had a lofty enough conception of journalism ; but to-day every sheet is modelled on the opinion of its readers. The question of drunkenness and public-houses, for instance, must not be touched. Even among the Nationalists editors are afraid to raise such a question as that of the enlisting of Irishmen in the British army. And apart from politics it is in things from England—fashions, theatres, races, British life—that this anti-British press is most interested. Who was it that said that journalism has no fatherland ?

Irish newspapers, as the Irish themselves, are often reproached for their abuse of politics and there is reason in the reproach. It must, nevertheless, be remembered that as a result of English oppression and of social cleavages, every Irish question inevitably takes on an aspect which is either political or religious. It must also be recognised that politics are for the Irishman something in the nature of a national sport, in which he finds material to flatter and satisfy at once his taste

for display and his taste for fighting. He likes demonstration for its own sake, for "the fun of it," independently of its object. He has a natural love for "scenes" in Parliament, for meetings on the model of a grand orchestra at which, after a whole afternoon of discourses, denunciations and "resolutions," the crowd marches through the streets with bands, banners and songs. To the same source we must refer those impressive declarations passed by political leagues in which a landlord-hunt or a grazier-boycott is decided upon—although everyone has decided in advance to have nothing to do with it—and all those little manoeuvres designed to upset the minds of the Unionists and the "Castle," grants refused by the County Councils for the upkeep of courthouses, loyal arms scratched off the facades of town halls, British crowns removed from municipal uniforms, the letters "O.H.M.S." effaced from official notepaper. We must seek, too, the same explanation for the scenes of violence, worthy of revolutionary clubs, of which the municipal councils of Dublin and Limerick have a speciality but not a monopoly; insults exchanged between the members and sometimes accompanied by assaults; the galleries intervening in the discussion; the name of the king hissed; the chairman negotiating with the disturbers and finally forced to suspend the sittings. The Irishman loves a battle in which blows are given and received: one needs to have seen one of those meetings which begin by a mere scuffle with naked hands and end with a regular combat with the police; one of those rousing election melees, at which the combatants arrive with their *camans* in their hands, and each party tries to prevent the other from holding its meeting, and attempts to seize the hostile flags, throwing stones and bricks at random. All this is "play," nervous supertension expending itself in superficial demonstrations, and no one thinks of taking it too seriously. "Irishmen cannot be taken too much *au pied de la lettre*," wrote an Irishman a short time ago. It is practically what

Wellington meant when he said that in Ireland it were well that the Government should be a little hard of hearing. As can easily be understood, politics practised after this fashion—and the Unionists are no more exempt than the Nationalists—are not likely to draw the more moderate and capable Irishmen into the arena. There are, thank God! enlightened and cultivated men in politics, but they are not the majority, and the majority does not fail to make its omnipotence felt. There is nothing to keep it in check; public opinion is so backward, so changeable, and the number of independent minds is so few. Have we not already said that once in power the Irishman is inclined to abuse it? There are in the "Castle" a certain number of Irishmen of good birth; and it is a well-known fact that they are far more despotic in their tendencies than their English colleagues. Similarly, if the occasion arises, no one can be more brutal than the Irish policeman. Authoritative and exclusive, the politicians reprobate all independence, are jealous of every movement distinct from theirs, and claim a monopoly of patriotism. Under the aegis of the Members of Parliament, the "oligarchy of eighty," they form a ring or syndicate, a mutual admiration society whose narrow and intolerant orthodoxy must be accepted: to criticise is to betray, and at the slightest remark you are shown the door. The servants of the people have made themselves the masters.

The corollaries of this political despotism are the dissensions, the "factions," the vendettas of persons or parties into which the different leaders draw the country whose forces they thus vainly waste. The *mot d'ordre* is: "Wreck what you cannot rule!" Nothing equals the violence of the insults which an Irish politician is capable of hurling at the head of an antagonist, if it be not the violence of those which he is accustomed to receive. True, here also, things must be taken *cum grano salis*; all is quickly forgotten, and next year you may see the two adversaries shake hands in public. The best

example of such political quarrels feverishly espoused by the nation is the celebrated schism provoked in 1890 by Parnell's refusal, after the divorce affair, to retire from the Chairmanship of the Irish Party. The majority having pronounced against him, the anti-Parnellites declared war upon the Parnellites. Ten months later the vanquished Parnell died. One might have expected that at this point the quarrel would have died out; but so far from doing so, it lasted another ten years.

Does this mean that the Irish Celts are by nature, as Mommsen has declared, "politically incapable?"[1] Does it mean that they are more attached to persons than to principles; or that, accustomed to obey but not to govern themselves, they stand always in need of a master, a dictator? The Celtophobe would erect into a race trait what is in reality but the temporary effect of a retardation in the social development of the country. If political education is still backward, and the political sense still in a rudimentary stage, this is the result of oppression, of the survival of servitude. O'Connell, who was the first to start popular action and agitation, did nothing to form opinion; Young Ireland devoted itself, not without success, but for too short a time, to that work of social education which was so roughly interrupted by the Great Famine; finally Parnell governed Ireland in a crisis of exceptional gravity, in the course of which a matured public opinion could only come as the result of the lessons of experience. That experience is now beginning to bear fruit. Although still very primitive, opinion is beginning to free itself from its leading strings, and to grow self-conscious. Democratic local government is little by little training the people in the conduct of their affairs; the political sense, the critical spirit, are awakening; the number of independent minds is on the increase, and *raimeis* is less impudently assertive. A dictator like Parnell or O'Connell would no longer be

[1] *Politisch durch und durch unbrauchbare Nation.* (Romische Geschichte, III., 285).

possible to-day, nor would a schism like that which dishonoured the last ten years of the nineteenth century. The great leaders of aforetime are no longer, or have no longer their former influence; they are weighed down by the failure of the Home Rule movement, which was the great work of their life. The leagues themselves are far from exercising the undisputed sovereignty of the Land or the National Leagues; they no longer concentrate in themselves all the aspirations of the country. Times have changed and ideas have progressed since fifteen years ago. Ireland has understood that politics are not everything; other desires and other aspirations have stirred into life within her.[2]

The progress of public opinion and of political morals in Ireland is and must—need we say?—be slow, and the more so because under the surface agitation, and the skin-deep excitement, there is at bottom, owing to the exhaustion of the struggle, a dead weight of apathy and fatalism. Ireland has long nourished herself on an instinctive and excessive optimism, which developed her energy but paralyzed her judgment; the reaction has come, and now Ireland is abandoning herself to a pessimism in which she finds a bitter joy; she enjoys parading her miseries, exaggerating them in her own eyes, crying them aloud to the world. Why struggle? Is not every effort doomed in advance to failure? Can any hope be cherished, save the decline and fall of England? Why be indignant or rebellious? Fate is stronger than man. Melancholy and discouraged eyes are fixed on the evils of Ireland and on the irreparable past. "Ah me! how the iron has sunk into our souls," cries a novelist, "Seven centuries of slavery have done their work well . . . . Nothing on earth can cure the inertia of Ireland . . . . The blood was stagnant in the veins of the people, and their feet were shod with lead . . . . It was the land of the lotus. The people were narcotized. It was a land of sleep and dreams."[3]

2 On these new movements see Part III. of this work.
3 *My New Curate*, p. 19, 20, 63.

Sometimes it seems as though a magic charm, an enchantment, heavy as lead and cold as death, lies upon the soul of Ireland ; [4] it seems as though she were asleep and paralysed in the lethargy of a sick man who suffers and pities himself by turns in his sleep. Who will awake her ? She stirs restlessly and cries out through the black void, as though in an evil dream. Who, then, will awaken Ireland ?

IV.—Anti-English Feeling.

It is said that hatred of England is no longer a living force amongst Irishmen. Is this quite true ? What are Ireland's real sentiments with regard to England, the King, and the Empire ?

Irish hatred of England is a sufficiently complex feeling. The English themselves are doubtful as to whether they should regard it as a remnant of the spirit of revolution, and should repress it, or whether they should treat it with scorn, as a sentimental and superannuated pose. Apparent contradictions, indeed, are not wanting. Irishmen are never tired of anathematising the "pirate Empire," that "Empire of Hell" to which the Presbyterian Mitchel dedicated the three hundred pages of hatred which go to make up his *Jail Journal.* Nevertheless a large portion of the British Empire is administered by Irishmen, who are either members of the Indian Civil Service, or leading politicians in Canada or Australia. Only a few years ago the honour of the British army was saved in South Africa by Irish soldiers ; notably by the Inniskillings at Pieters, the Connaught Rangers at Colenso, and the Dublin Fusiliers at Talana Hill. Of this last regiment a thousand went to the front, and only three hundred returned. Yet throughout the whole war the Irish people were aggressively "Pro-Boer." They elected as member of Parliament for Galway a man

[4] *Ideals in Ireland*, London, 1901, p. 81.

who had just returned from fighting for the Boers. When the newly-elected County Councils met in 1898, they immediately voted addresses of congratulation to President Kruger.

Who, then, are the true representatives of Ireland? Are they the soldiers or the politicians, the officials of the Empire, or the revolutionists like Mitchel? The question is easily answered. Hatred of England still exists in Ireland. At the commencement of the twentieth century the nation is still rebellious and indomitable. Every year clever young men who see no prospect of success at home go over to England, where they know there is some scope for their talents. Every year there are Irish mercenaries who will accept the "Saxon Shilling" either in a spirit of adventure or because work is scarce. But all this effects no fundamental change. If Ireland was proud of the bravery of her soldiers in a cause which was not her cause, the Irish recruit is thought little of by his own people. It is only the good-for-nothings who enlist, and it is an insult to a man to say that he is in the militia. When those poor fellows sailed from Queenstown on British transport ships for the Cape in 1900, they cried "Three cheers for Kruger!" Indeed it is doubtful if they knew for whom or for what they were going to fight.

What is the inner significance of this disloyalty? If you ask a moderate Nationalist he will answer you in some such words as these: "Why is Ireland rebellious? England is loyal because she is free and prosperous. The Colonies are loyal for the same reason; they would cease to be loyal the instant they lost their liberty and prosperity. On the other hand, Ireland is rebellious because she is neither free nor happy. Everything which makes England and the Colonies loyal makes Ireland rebellious. To whom and to what are we to be loyal? Loyal to famine, to landlordism, and to coercion? To a Government whose only policy has ever been *divide ut imperes*, and to a Constitution which deprives us of our

rights? England has oppressed and exploited us for seven centuries; her object still is to depopulate and Anglicise the country and to destroy the race. Her aim is to turn Ireland into a cattle-ranch. She distorts historical facts in order to spread slanderous theories, and thinks she has atoned for the past when she offers us a series of half measures and badly planned reforms. These reforms, moreover, always come too late, and are only granted in response to threats of violence and Fenianism. England has done her best to turn us into rebels. Loyalty on our part would only be hypocrisy. As for the utilitarian and conditional loyalty of the 'Garrison,' it is the loyalty of a dog to the master who feeds it.

"Loyalty is due in the first place to the liberties of our country. As a nation, Ireland, like every other nation, has a right to these liberties. England stole them from us when she abolished our Parliament and our Constitution by means of that Act of Union which was called by Gladstone 'the most ignoble transaction known to history.' Ever since 1800 we have been governed by force, and by corruption. Ireland has never ceased to protest against this tyrannical usurpation of her rights, and to disavow—not the British Constitution, for she is not really governed by it—but the constitutional symbols which are forced upon her. Autonomy is granted to Australia, to the Cape, to Canada, and refused to Ireland, one of the oldest Christian nations in the world!

"The martyrs in the cause of Ireland are innumerable. They are of different ranks and creeds, but they are united to each other by their patriotism. Remember Theobald Wolfe Tone, who was tried and condemned by court-martial whilst wearing the French uniform; the two brothers Sheares who were executed side by side; Robert Emmet, who forbade that his epitaph should be written until Ireland had taken her place amongst the nations of the earth; John Mitchel, who said to his judges: 'I believe that the course which I have opened

is only commenced. The Roman who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant, promised that three hundred should follow out his enterprise. Can I not promise for one, for two, for three, aye, for hundreds ? ' In response to his words voices from all parts of the building exclaimed : ' For me ! For me ! promise for me, Mitchel ! '

" *Invita pars Imperii*, Ireland only demands her liberty ; she does not seek riches or conquests. What, in her view, is Imperialism ? She sees in it a gospel of force, justifying every excess. Victims of oppression, as we Irishmen are, we do not wish to become oppressors, and we have no desire to share the government of the world with England. We bestow our sympathy only on the feeble and on the vanquished. It is reserved for a handful of Boers who are resisting the might of England, or for the people of Spain in their struggle against America. We care nothing for that British Empire of which Ireland is a subject. Our sons have done more than their share towards establishing this Empire, but what does this profit us ? We have neither industries nor commerce, and yet out of our poverty we pay more than a fair proportion of those taxes which maintain the power of Britain. Our Empire is a spiritual Empire—that Empire made up of the idealism, the sentiment, the piety which it is our mission to propagate in opposition to the vile current of contemporary materialism. We seek no new spheres of influence, no new markets for our goods ; our mission is to save souls. The British Empire is the curse of Ireland ; it has brought her nothing but suffering and ruin.

" Ireland truly is dying of wretchedness and slavery, and England has sworn to destroy her. Ours is a supreme, a crying case of injustice ; so long as the Irish are miserable and enslaved, so long will they be rebels. We are all rebels, and we rejoice in the title. Every Irishman worth his salt is a rebel. ' Loyalty without liberty,' said Grattan, ' means corruption.' "

Such in substance is the case for the Nationalists. Such arguments as these were used by Parnell, and they are still employed by the leaders of the Parliamentary Party. The Separatists despise such mild arguments, and would be satisfied with nothing less than a holy war against England. The Opportunists, or Whigs, again, would not go so far as the Parliamentary Party. While criticising the excessive Imperialism and the dishonesty of Mr. Healy's "John Bull and Co., Robbers," they are yet secretly proud of what they go so far as to call "our Empire." Conscious of the futility of revolt, they keep their nationalism confined within the strict limits of the respect due to the Crown and the Constitution. "Why exasperate the English," they ask, "by playing at drawing-room revolutions and theatrical treason? Since our object is to reform the Constitution, and to obtain self-government by constitutional means, let us in effect be 'Constitutionalists.' The Crown and the Constitution are above politics, and loyalty to the Constitution, but especially to the Sovereign, lessens no man's nationalism." But at this point of the argument the orthodox Nationalists cry halt. "We recognise," say they, "neither a Constitution nor a constitutional monarch. We make use of constitutional means to obtain our end, but this end is not a constitutional one. We do not object to this or that particular Government or policy, but to the pseudo-constitution which has been forced upon us, and which is a fraud and a sham. The Crown is the symbol of this Constitution; the Sovereign is the representative of England, So long, therefore, as Ireland is deprived of her rights, we regard loyalty to the King or the Constitution as synonymous with treachery." [1]

[1] The divergence between the two parties was somewhat marked, on the occasion of the visit paid to Ireland in 1900 by Queen Victoria, and in 1903 by King Edward. Were the various public bodies to present addresses of welcome to the Sovereigns? The question was warmly debated, and was decided sometimes in one way, sometimes in another. When Queen Victoria came over in 1900 she was received with no marks of incivility, although everyone knew that she hated the Irish. Moreover, as a prominent Nationalist remarked, she came

One cannot but feel, however, that there is something a little artificial in this anti-English attitude of official Nationalism, when one notes the strange and inconsequent outbreaks of loyalty by which it is in practice accompanied. Thus in 1900, the Corporation of Dublin voted an "Address" to the Sovereign, and in 1903, refused an Address. The Lord Mayor, after voting against the Address, gave an official welcome to the English fleet, and invited the King to open a charity bazaar. Some Nationalists will drink the King's health at private functions, but refuse to do so in public. In Dublin, military bands are hissed in the Phœnix Park, but when a regiment marches along the streets all the children, little and big, run beside it in the greatest delight, like so many Parisian *badauds*.[2]

Are we then to conclude that Irish hatred of England is a purely abstract and superficial affair? By no means. All this simply proves that human nature has its weaknesses, and that in Ireland, as elsewhere, a man must adjust himself to certain conventions and social necessities if he is to live at all. Irish hatred of the English people is not very common, or, perhaps, one can more justly say, is not very deep. What is, however, very general and very deep is a general spirit of hostility and aversion for England as a sovereign power, for English law and the English Government. Ireland is full of rancour for the past, and of distrust for the future, and she cherishes the hope and the ambition of revenge. Disloyalty of this sort has undoubtedly increased during the nineteenth century. That it has done so is due to the hundred years of British policy, which produced the Clearances, the Great Famine, and Emigration. Large

over as a recruiting sergeant, in search of "food for cannon." On the other hand, King Edward is personally popular in Ireland. When he was ill, in 1902, general sympathy was felt for him throughout Ireland, and the *Freeman* concluded its leading article on his illness with the words, "God save Ireland."

[2] In the same way, Unionist shopkeepers, in order to retain Nationalist custom, hang out flags on the anniversary of the execution of the Manchester Martyrs.

numbers of Irishmen have gone to America, and have become more anti-English than the Irish at home. At the time of the Union the Catholic clergy were in favour of the Government then established, but now, all this is changed. The mention of the Queen's name at O'Connell's Repeal meetings was the signal for a burst of cheers. When in 1837 she came over to Ireland for the first time —the young and gracious successor to a throne that had of late been stained by so many scandals—O'Connell congratulated her on her accession in the name of the Irish nation. On the other hand, when she died in 1901 the various public bodies almost unanimously refused to vote addresses of condolence, and in the following year the Nationalist members refused to attend the Coronation of Edward VII. "Loyalty," said Swift, "is the foible of the Irish people." The people of Ireland have never been more disloyal than they are at the present day. In the early days of the South African war, I used to watch the effect of the announcement of British defeats on the people of Dublin. The crowds would thrill with excitement, and men, radiant with delight, would stop in the streets to express to utter strangers the pleasure that the news gave them. To them these Boer victories seemed to herald the downfall of England.

Yet another instance of anti-English feeling is to be found in the reverence which Ireland displays for the last of the victims in her cause, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, the three "Manchester Martyrs" who were executed in 1867, in consequence of the fatal results of an armed attack which they made upon a prison-van containing two notable Fenian prisoners, in the course of which Sergeant Brett was accidentally shot. Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien! "Anarchists!" someone will say. "Martyrs!" replies Ireland. Patriots sacrificed after a partial and prejudiced trial, like common murderers, to appease the blood-fury of the British lion! Irishmen will never forget the words spoken to the judge by one of the prisoners: "You will soon send us before God,

and I am perfectly prepared to go. I have nothing to regret, or to retract, or take back. I can only say, 'God save Ireland!'" [3]

Evidently then, Ireland is not reconciled to England. Must this always be the case? Curiously enough this anti-English feeling is excited by those parties whose best interests would be served by its disappearance. The English Tories exasperate the Irish by contemptuous insults, and endeavour to compromise them by treating any act of friendliness on their part as an abandonment of their principles. The Unionist "loyalists" of Ireland employ their "loyalty" as an instrument of oppression in such a fashion as to associate in the minds of the "rebels" the idea of "loyalty" with everything that is anti-patriotic and anti-national. They have converted the English National Anthem, *God save the King*, into a party song, which forms an appropriate pendant to *To Hell with the Pope*, and means *Down with Ireland*. They seize every opportunity to provoke the Nationalists. In 1885, the Prince of Wales came over to Ireland and was received with respect by the people. Thereupon the loyalists shouted with joy and declared that Ireland was at last reconciled to English rule. To this the Irish responded by greeting the Prince throughout his tour with hisses, black flags, and scuffles with the police. If anti-English feeling in Ireland were at its last gasp it could not fail to be revived by the tactics of the Unionists.

Yet there was a time, not long ago, when this hatred of England seemed on the way to be obliterated, or at least greatly diminished.

This was when Mr. Gladstone and his followers rallied to the Irish side, and the cause of Home Rule seemed on the high road to success. Ireland began to believe in the justice and good sense of England, and appeared ready to accept the *Entente Cordiale*, the Union of Hearts which

3 The revival of anti-English feeling is particularly marked amongst the young men of the present day. At the Conferring of Degrees in the Royal University, October, 1905, the students hissed the (English) National Anthem.

was to usher in a new era. It was a brief dream, which had a brutal awakening. Stricken to the heart by the rejection of Home Rule, Ireland learned the true character of that British democracy in whom she had placed her trust, and whom she now saw, deaf to her voice, turn away and plunge into the abyss of Imperialism. Even were Home Rule granted to-morrow the *Entente Cordiale* would not be restored by it. Wider experience brings deeper distrust and the lost opportunity of conciliation will not come so soon again. Born out of distress and oppression as it is, why should Irish hatred of England die out until the last traces of this distress and oppression have been effaced ? As Grattan truly said, " As equals we shall be her sincerest friend, as anything less than her equal we shall be her bitterest enemy."

Irish disloyalty is the outcome of political hostility : it is the rancour of the conquered against the conqueror, of the exploited against the exploiter. But over and above politics there is between the two peoples the most pronounced opposition imaginable from a psychological, social, and religious point of view. This second source of hatred reinforces the first, and it is amplified and intensified by the extremists, the Ultras of both camps. The Tories are blinded by their hatred of everything Celtic ; whilst to the Irish irreconcilables the English are a mere compound of vices, full of sin and meat, and framed on the model of the Pharisee who lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, " Lord, I thank thee that I am not as this publican."

We shall put aside both these extravagances of national pride. Nevertheless, it is obvious that a people like the Irish, idealistic and generous, mobile and emotional, ready to sacrifice the real to the ideal, can have but little sympathy with the stolidity, selfishness and commercial temper of the British " nation of shopkeepers," or above all with its cant, and its characteristic faculty of eternally seeing " duty " where its interests call it. May not Ireland, with some reason, decline to be attracted by a

social system, which, in the words of Matthew Arnold, "ends by landing modern communities in the possessorship of an upper class materialised, a middle class vulgarised, a lower class brutalised." [4] Ireland, moreover, is sensitive and sentimental; and she resents bitterly the want of consideration with which the English, rather, perhaps, because they are such poor psychologists than through any lack of good-will, regard everything that is not English. "Their temper," said Burke, "must be managed and their good affections cultivated." This is precisely what the English have never done, and Ireland most of all has suffered at their hands. "The Irish quick-wittedness," writes Matthew Arnold in the same essay, "sentiment, keen feeling for social life and manners, demanded something which this hard and imperfect civilization cannot give them."

Indeed, the two nations are so fundamentally different that they can never thoroughly understand each other. Behind Ireland's historic hatred of England there is a profound mental and moral antagonism. There will always be Englishmen who will despise Irishmen, and there will always be Irishmen who will scorn England, and will say with a mingling of horror and pride: "No! we are *not* English!"

V.—Irishmen and France.

Is it an illusion to think that the sympathy which Ireland has always manifested towards France, and which is so precious to France, has a deeper source than mere hatred of England? It does not spring merely from remembrance of the hospitality which Irish exiles found in France, whether in the service of the Bourbons, or in the armies of Napoleon. Never was hospitality paid for at such a price; every field of honour was stained with the blood of gallant soldiers who had fallen under the banner of the Irish Brigade. There is between Ireland and France a certain affinity of character, a certain

4 *Irish Essays*, p. 61.

likeness of qualities, tendencies, and, let us add, even defects, the outcome in all probability of common Celtic blood and similar climatic conditions. "The Irish are the French of the West," says M. Daryll; "we feel at once that they are our first cousins." Priests and peasants, the bourgeoisie and the upper classes, all alike have a place in their hearts for our beloved and unhappy France. Nowhere in the world did our revolutions of 1789 and 1848 awaken wider reverberations than among the people of Ireland; and nowhere have more tears been shed over our reverses. The writer of these lines will never forget how he met one day, amid the ruins of Murrisk Abbey, a Mayo peasant who, after a few words on other matters, began to speak of France and French affairs. His gentle voice became grave as he talked of the war of '70; one might have thought it a thing that had happened yesterday, a calamity that had fallen on his own family, as he said with profound emotion: "We know all about it!" A few years ago, one of my friends, who was travelling in the West of Ireland, met an old countryman who, after some casual remarks, asked in a serious tone of voice: "Well, sir, are the French getting strong?" In 1870-71 such scenes as the following were to be met with in Ireland. A peasant, on the arrival of the weekly newspapers, would sit down under a tree and, putting on his glasses, proceed to read aloud the news of the war to the assembled villagers, whose intense interest might be guessed from the silent tears trickling down their faces, as the sad story was unfolded.

France has ever been, for the Irish, "the only sympathetic nation." In spite of our reverses, our intestine struggles, and our present anti-Catholicism (which is bitterly deplored) Ireland still bends her eyes and reaches out her arms towards France. France is to her a sort of Earthly Paradise, a Land of the Free, a chosen place of rural democracy. She rejoices in our joys, weeps over our faults, glories in our glory, and will ever know us as "The Great Nation."

CHAPTER IV.—THE GOVERNMENT

English Unionists will tell you with great assurance that the Sister Island is to-day in full enjoyment of just and impartial government. Ireland possesses, according to them, the same free institutions as England. Like England she has her representatives in the Imperial Parliament, which governs the two countries in precisely the same spirit. Ireland has the protection of *habeas corpus*, she has trial by jury, a permanent judiciary, a system of popular and elective local government, and a guarantee of "equality, parity and simultaneity"[1] of treatment with Great Britain as regards legislation; what more does she want? Nowhere in the world is there such liberty as in Ireland; the Press prints what it pleases, and not one newspaper is seized or prosecuted in a twelve-month. If the Irish keep on grumbling it is merely out of habit or hatred. Such is the thesis of Unionism: we have now to determine whether this thesis is in accord with the facts.

I.—The Regime of the Conquest.

The basis of the political system of Ireland is the Act of Union of 1800. This Act, as we have already pointed out, did not effect a legal assimilation or union of the two countries as regards either the civil law, the judiciary, or the administration It merely effected a fusion of the Parliaments, or rather it first mutilated the Irish representation and then engulfed it in that of Great Britain. No Irish majority, however great, has since then been anything more than a feeble minority at Westminster.

[1] A phrase of Lord Randolph Churchill in 1886.

Ireland found herself depressed to the status of a negligible fraction of the Imperial system, and her right of representation reduced to a nullity. As is well known, she has fought incessantly through the century for the restoration of her lost autonomy, whether by repeal of the Act of Union, or by the establishment of an Irish Parliament, subject to the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, with an Irish Executive responsible to it. The former was O'Connell's Repeal Movement, the latter is the modern Home Rule Movement.

The Act of Union left Ireland in a condition of dependence, ruled absolutely by the Garrison, and with all the old abuses hidden under a mask of legality and of constitutional forms. The Viceroy, or Lord Lieutenant, remained as a symbol of this dependence. A Deputy of the Sovereign, playing at sovereignty, he still holds levees, signs proclamations, receives, presides, inaugurates, and maintains his quasi-royal Court, with its population of snobs, parasites, and parvenus. The Westminster Parliament legislates, it is true, for the whole United Kingdom, but in nine cases out of ten the laws passed by Great Britain do not apply to Ireland. Ireland has her own special laws, the character of which has been aptly conveyed by Chief Baron Palles, one of the greatest of Irish judges. "The most you can say for these Acts," he once observed, "is that they are good enough for Ireland, but if they had existed in England they would not have been allowed to remain on the Statute Book for six months." Considered thus in its actual working, the Union is seen to be a Union merely for purposes of parade. It is, in Gladstone's phrase, a "paper-union," or, to adopt more familiar language, a pure farce and fraud. The real truth is that during the great part of the nineteenth century Ireland remained under the regime of the Conquest. She was governed exclusively in the interests of the Garrison. Something very like martial law was almost a matter of course, and coercion was all but permanent. Indeed, there were 87 Coercion Acts in 100

years. The severity of the Acts, especially of the earlier, deserves a special word. The Act of 1800 removed the decisions of the Courts Martial from any sort of review by the ordinary courts. The Act of 1817 gave the justices, in other words, the landlords, jurisdiction to try without appeal and to condemn to seven years' transportation any person in a disturbed district who was adjudged to be "idle and disorderly," especially anyone found in possession of arms, or in a tavern or public-house after nine o'clock in the evening; and these provisions were revived in the middle of the century by Sir Robert Peel.[2] At the uprise of Parnellism, in the year 1881, a Liberal Government passed a Coercion Act authorising the Executive to commit to prison, for an indefinite period, and without trial, any person who could be regarded as an object of "legitimate suspicion."[3] An Act of 1882 gave the police in disturbed districts power to make domiciliary visits at night, and to arrest any person found outside his own home. It further established special courts of summary jurisdiction, which were at once popularly christened, by a reminiscence of Cromwellian days, the "Slaughter Houses."[4] The Conservatives then tried their hand at Coercion. In 1887 Mr. Balfour carried the perpetual Crimes Act,[5] which, although less drastic than its predecessors, enabled him to proceed against five thousand persons in three years. People were sent to prison for shouting "Hurrah for Gladstone!" and for whistling "Harvy Duff" within hearing of the police. A little girl of twelve was convicted of having obstructed the Sheriff's bailiffs in the course of a seizure, and a little

[2] At the beginning of the 19th century whipping was still the punishment prescribed in many Acts, and was of daily application. "I have known men," said O'Connell, "whipped almost to death." *Cf.* T. P. O'Connor, *Parnell Movement*, Ch. II. C. G. Duffy, *Four Years of Irish History*, p. 55-56.

[3] Act of March 2nd, 1881.

[4] *Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act*, July 12th, 1882.

[5] 50 and 51 Vic., c. 20 (July 19th, 1887). Trial by Jury was superseded in the case of certain offences by trial by Resident Magistrate. The Lord Lieutenant was given power to proclaim disturbed districts and dangerous associations, etc.

boy of intimidation ; it was found that he had looked at a policeman "with a humbugging sort of a smile!"[6] And every measure of coercion produced the same effect on Ireland, the effect which a red rag produces on a bull. The victims of the government were acclaimed as martyrs ; political prisoners became popular heroes, and the more notable of them were returned to Parliament.

Coercion finds in corruption an efficient ally in the government of Ireland. It even stoops on occasion, especially from 1870 onwards, to the use of conciliation—sugar-plums alternating with the stick, and cuffs with kisses. Conciliation, corruption, coercion, there you have the three ingredients of Irish government. They call for expert hands in the compounding, and more than one Chief Secretary has lost his post through a blunder in the quantities. Governments live purely from hand to mouth, with no continuity of effort, and no settled aim. While pandering to the Nationalists they divide their ranks, and sow amongst them distrust and dissension. Appeal is made to the appetite of the Garrison for places and honours. The trimmers are won over and the swash-bucklers kept in hand by that species of gratitude which has been described as an expectation of favours to come. "Political jobbery is almost as flourishing in the beginning of the twentieth as at the end of the eighteenth century."[7] Public policy is a perpetual see-saw, and Castle government sways from side to side under the pressure of events, satisfying neither the "rebels" nor the "loyalists." It has no friends save those who hold or hunger for places ; and succeeds, with all its juggleries, only in being at the same time very tyrannical and very weak, in a country which stands pre-eminently in need of a government at once just and strong, and strong because just.

[6] Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism*, p. 526. In 1902 there was another campaign of coercion, although on a much reduced scale. In 15 years 1,600 persons were condemned to the degrading punishment of hard labour under the Act of 1887.

[7] T. W. Russell, *Ireland and the Empire*, p. 6.

II.—The Castle.[1]

The centre and symbol of Government is Dublin Castle—that veiled, anonymous, and all-powerful institution, housed in the old fortress, which stands solidly on high ground in the heart of the capital, half-screened by a curtain of business-houses. The Castle is a world in itself, a city within the city. It is at once the Palace of the Viceroy, a military barrack, the seat of administration, and the office of the secret police; and yet in the days of Fenianism the Castle was full of their spies, and their printing-presses were at work under the very shadow of its walls. Omnipotent and omniscient, the Castle rules over Ireland. But who rules over the Castle?

Officially it is the "Lord Lieutenant and Governor General of Ireland," assisted by a Privy Council.[2] Or rather, as in our days the Lord Lieutenant is as a rule a figure-head who reigns but does not rule, it is the Chief Secretary who directs the Government and is responsible for it to Parliament. Under the Chief Secretary there is a permanent Under-Secretary, an Inspector-General of Police, and a whole net-work of "Boards." These "Boards" are separate and semi-independent, each of them having its own President and its own special organization.[3] The permanent officials who control the Boards form a junta of twelve or fifteen, all men of experience and capacity, and it is this junta, which, although nominally under the control of the Irish Minister, really directs the machinery of the Castle and the fortunes of Ireland.

It is in the nature of things that this should be the

1 Davitt, *Leaves from a Prison Diary*, 1885, Chap. 32. *Thom*, etc.

2 There are some sixty members of the Privy Council, royal Princes, retired Chief Secretaries, Judges, high officials and the like, nominated by the Lord Lieutenant. It is a consultative body, but also exercises certain judicial functions.

3 Ireland has, in the words of a popular saying, *as many Boards as would make her coffin.*

case. Imagine the situation of a Chief Secretary newly appointed to his most difficult office. He comes to Ireland full of prejudices and preconceptions, and like most Englishmen, excessively ignorant of Irish conditions.

"He forgot the number of Chief Secretaries," said Lord Morris, "that he had welcomed to Ireland. They all came over perfectly ignorant, but three hours after they had landed at Kingstown pier, they could show him over his estate in Spiddal."

It does not take him long to discover that he is completely in the hands of his functionaries. His Parliamentary duties keep him in London for six or eight months of the year; and he is forced to accept his information on current affairs in Ireland from the permanent officials of the Castle, without even having an opportunity of verifying it, and to rely on their recommendations in making appointments. The representative of Ireland in England, and of England in Ireland, he is an "embarrassed phantom," doomed to be swept away by the first gust of political change. The last twenty years, indeed, have seen thirteen Chief Secretaries come and go! With or against his will he is a close prisoner of the little, irresponsible *coterie* which forms the inner circle of Irish administration. Even a change of government in England is not a change of government in Ireland. The Chief Secretary goes, but the permanent officials remain. The case of the clock is changed, but the mechanism continues as before.[4]

Their position owes its strength not merely to English ignorance of all things Irish but to the further fact that they represent the Anglo-Saxon and Protestant Garrison who are the bulwark of Unionism, and the great pillars of English rule in Ireland. The Irish oligarchy has retained its supremacy in the Castle. Dislodged elsewhere, it still holds the central fortress of administration, and will continue to hold it until the concession of autonomy to Ireland enables the country to re-mould its adminis-

4 A saying of Sir Donald MacFarlane.

trative system on national and democratic lines. Among the higher functionaries not more than one in five or six is a Catholic in religion, or of Nationalist sympathies in politics; and the few that one does find in high office are more "loyal" than the king, and more reactionary even than their colleagues.[5] In the Privy Council there are only 7 Catholics as against 50 Protestants. Of the 18 Judges of the High Court only 3 are Catholics. Such are the generals and officers of the huge army of officials nominated and controlled by the Castle, every department exhibiting the Catholics in a hopeless minority. Of 1,272 Justices of the Peace appointed between 1895 and 1902 only 251 were Catholics. Of the 68 Resident Magistrates only 19 are Catholics, of the 21 County Court Judges only 7, of the 37 County Inspectors of Police only 4, and of the 214 District Inspectors of Police only from 20 to 30. And the Catholics, be it noted, form three-fourths of the population. When we come to the corporals and private soldiers of administration, we do not, of course, find the same condition of things. Tolerance is freely exercised in regard to the positions which are not thought worth disputing. Thus, nine constables in ten are Catholics, and the same proportion would hold in the lower ranks of the Civil Service, such as the Post Office. But care is taken to bar the path to advancement against these minor officials who are Irish in blood and sympathy. The well-paid posts are reserved for Garrison Protestants or imported Englishmen, the way being made clear for them by the transfer of Irish Civil Servants to the lower ranks in Great Britain. This system possesses the double advantage of dispeopling Ireland of the Irish, and peopling it with English Protestants.[6] Emancipated by law three-quarters of a century ago, the Irish Catholics

5 We must note the exceptional case of Sir Antony MacDonnell, who when Under-Secretary, showed great impartiality and genuine patriotism.

6 The example given by government is followed "only more so" by the banks, railways and other great corporations. Catholic Nationalists have of late made a vigorous protest against this policy of exclusiveness.

are still treated as enemies and suspects in their own country, and are excluded from all the most important posts in the Civil Service. The Act of 1829 remains a dead letter; or at least Emancipation, while registered on the Statute Book, has not yet passed into the custom and practice of government. Nationalist and Catholic as she is, Ireland still lies under the dominion of the Protestant Ascendancy. The Garrison has lost its monopoly in law of the functions of the State, but retains a monopoly in fact. *Victoribus spolia*!

This bureaucracy was, indeed, an apt instrument in the hands of the political oligarchy which till lately was supreme in Ireland, for it was essentially Tory and reactionary in character. From time to time an Irish Secretary has attempted to introduce a leaven of Liberalism, but these attempts have never been successful. Mr. John Morley thought to effect some change in the political atmosphere of the Castle, but soon found this hope entirely illusory. As an Irish writer has said, "He came to Ireland with the powers of a Cromwell, but he was Cromwell in the midst of an army of royalists."[7] He was received in the Castle as the General of the Ironsides would have been received in a roomful of Cavaliers. The regime of the Conquest was too firmly established, and the tradition of coercion too deeply stamped into the fabric, to admit of any change. Whether the Ministry of the day be Tory or Liberal there is the same attitude of autocratic insolence in relation to the mere Irish, the "natives." The men of the Castle live in a world apart, in an atmosphere of privilege and prejudice, entirely inaccessible to public opinion. Irish opinion, indeed, is not even consulted; and the Nationalist leader can count upon a much more attentive hearing in London from the

The excuse put forward is alleged lack of energy on the part of Catholics, as one result, it is said, of the Penal Laws, or indeed of their religion itself, and lack of higher education, owing to the absence of a proper university. Neither of these defences is sufficient. The ancient anti-Catholic and anti-Irish prejudice is still very strong in Ireland.

7 Mr. William O'Brien, *Irish Ideas*, p. 96.

Prime Minister, than he would receive from a Government clerk in Dublin. The needs and desires of the people are either not known or disregarded. Even when Parliament has passed some Irish reform or other, the Castle sets to work to hamper its machinery, and delay its operation by a sheaf of rules and interpretations. Every concession to Ireland is distorted and deformed in administration.[8]

These considerations explain the intense hatred with which the Castle is regarded ; everything it touches turns bad in public estimation. It is not merely a foreign power ; it is at once hostile, anti-democratic, mercenary and irresponsible.[9] Within the last thirty years everything else has changed in Ireland. The Established Church is gone, and with it many of the official privileges of the Garrison. But the Castle remains unchanged, not in the least degree adjusted to the new order of things. All Ireland is in protest against it, the Ultra-Unionists alone excepted. Public opinion is in arms against the overgrown officialism, which, with its array of Boards, has made Irish administration the most costly and the least efficient in the world.[10] The Castle must be abolished, say the Nationalists, or at all events it must be brought under popular control. It must be reformed, say the Unionists, by making the heads of the departments responsible to Parliament. But is it possible to reform the Castle ? " Why reform the Castle ? " as Mr. Morley asked the Unionists not long ago.[11] " Is not the Castle after all the best machine that has ever been invented for governing a country against its will ? "

8 For example, in the administration of the Land Act of 1903, under Mr. Wyndham, secret instructions were issued to the Estates Commissioners by the Castle with the object of defeating and rendering useless the provisions of the Act with regard to the distribution of grass lands. A thousand other instances might be adduced.

9 The only control to which the Castle Departments are subject appears to be the financial control of the Treasury.

10 *Cf.* Lord Dunraven, *The Crisis in Ireland*, 1905.

11 Speech at Manchester, May 12th, 1902.

III.—Local Administration.

One great reform, however, has been forced on the Castle, and by a Unionist Ministry, the Local Government Act of 1898.[1] The effect of this Act has been to introduce the representative principle into local administration and to overthrow the old oligarchy.

Up till then local administration in Ireland,[2] as indeed in England till 1888, had been essentially aristocratic. Each of the 32 Irish counties had a Grand Jury, nominated by the Sheriff, or in other words by the Castle, from amongst the landlords of the county, Peers alone being excluded. This body, under the direction of the Judge of Assize, struck the rates, and raised the revenue requisite for local services. They met once a year at the county town; and the novels of Miss Edgeworth, now almost forgotten, give us a vivid picture not only of misdeeds and malversations on the part of these strange administrators, but also of their pomp and circumstance. The town was brilliantly decorated for the Judge's visit, and he sat at a sumptuous dinner with the Grand Jury, while, without, the condemned prisoners were being handed over to the executioner and hanged. This corruption and luxury gradually disappeared in the nineteenth century, and the Grand Juries were brought into close dependence upon the Castle. In 1836 provision was further made that all proposed expenditure must first be approved by a Presentment Sessions, a certain number of whose members were elective; but the change was insignificant, and local administration remained almost exclusively in the hands of the landlords. The state of things was much the same as regards the relief of the

[1] 61 and 62 Vic., c. 37 (August 12th, 1898). *Cf. Annual Reports of the Local Government Board.* O'Connor Morris, *Present Irish Questions*, 1901, p. 309.

[2] *Cf.* J. Flack, *Le Gouvernement local de l'Irlande*, Paris, 1889. De Beaumont, *op. cit.* I., 272. There were, however, certain differences between the two countries, especially with regard to the function of the Grand Jury.

poor, and the medical and sanitary services. These functions were exercised in each of the 163 Poor Law Unions by a Board of Guardians, consisting in part of *ex-officio* members (Justices of the Peace), and in part of representatives elected by public vote on a restricted franchise. As for the towns and boroughs the "Gentry" continued to control them for a good part of the nineteenth century, and their administration was so prolific in abuses that only a very few cities were granted even a restricted franchise. It has only to be added that politics had already struck root here and there in Urban Councils and in Boards of Guardians. The growth has thriven, and these bodies are to-day centres of violent anti-English demonstrations.

A very real revolution was effected in this superannuated system by the Act of 1898. The Grand Juries cease to exist as administrative bodies.[3] Local administration passes into the hands of elected Councils, and its area is divided between 33 County Councils (to which must be added the Councils of the six great cities,[4] reconstructed on the same model) and 302 Urban and Rural District Councils. All the Councils are elected on a wide franchise, which includes women.[5] The Castle, functioning through the Local Government Board, exercises a general supervision over their work. It is the exit of the Garrison, and the entrance of the people. Everywhere, except in Ulster, the Nationalist vote secures possession of the great majority of the seats, leaving only a small minority to the landlords. With the control of seats there passes as a corollary the control of the patronage for positions, such as those of clerk, workhouse master, rate collector,

3 The Grand Jury retains only its judicial function, which was the only power it ever possessed in England.

4 The six County Boroughs are Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Derry, Limerick and Waterford.

5 Clergymen are ineligible. The County Councils have power to send delegates to the General Council of County Councils, a body which, although it possesses little legal power, is in its very institution a sort of landmark on the way to national autonomy. The Separatists desire to make it into a National Parliament, and to withdraw from the Westminster Parliament.

dispensary doctor, and the like, which were formerly retained in the hands of the Garrison, and from which, even at present, Catholics are rigorously excluded in many parts of Ulster. The democracy becomes practically supreme in local affairs, under the supervision of a central Board.

Now, what has been the record of the Irish democracy ? Admittedly the Act was a delicate experiment which imposed a very severe task on a people, deprived by British policy of any earlier training in political responsibility. The Cassandras of reaction prophesied all kinds of disaster. Nothing would come of these popular bodies, they said, but corruption, wastefulness, and the exploitation of minorities. These gloomy vaticinations have been belied by the facts, and in a very striking way ; for the success of the new order is conceded, with certain reserves, even by hostile Unionist opinion and by the Local Government Board in its annual Reports. There have, of course, been many blunders due to inexperience. The local councils delight in political resolutions, and anti-English demonstrations. Their meetings are often noisy, and in the villages the councillors are not always entirely sober. But whether peasants or artisans, they have a very keen sense of the line that divides excitement from business, and although hampered by an excessive complexity of rules and regulations, they have shown themselves better administrators than the landlords. Being themselves for the most part poor they understand the value of money, and have been more economical than their predecessors.

" Nowhere in Great Britain," wrote a Unionist lately, " have I seen local bodies taking more real interest in their work." [6] The danger of the future is, beyond

[6] *Irish Times*, November 18th, 1902. It is not a rare thing to find newly-created elective bodies at first very economical and afterwards very extravagant. *E.g.* the Algerian delegations. Certain cities, like Limerick, Dublin, etc., are proverbial for bad management. Their Corporation meetings are notorious for turbulence and empty political demonstrations.

doubt, favouritism and jobbery. Even at present there is a tendency to "corner" offices and even contracts for the members of this or that political league; the custom of *combinazione* is widely diffused; everybody is on the scent for places for his friends and relatives; and the reign of rings and bosses seems to be opening.[7] A strong central authority is needed to keep these tendencies in check. Unhappily the Local Government Board is not strong but merely bureaucratic, arbitrary, narrow-minded and anti-national. It is guilty of all the abuses of authority, and is filled with a passion for directing and complicating everything. Money being nothing to it, it arranges its plans on the same large and stately scale as in England, and forces the councils to extravagant expenditure which the poverty of the country does not justify. In fact, its despotic and irresponsible arrogance makes its rule as intolerable to the Unionists of Ulster as to the Nationalists of the South.[8]

The struggle between this foreign power and the elected councils, between centralised authority and popular representation, must end fatally for the one or the other. Either term of the antithesis must be suppressed or subsumed under the other. In other words, England will find herself compelled either to take back from the Irish what she has already given them, namely, a certain control over local affairs, or to concede what she has for a century refused, namely, some part in the management of their national affairs. Therein lies the political significance of the establishment of Local Government in Ireland. The experiment must needs be fruitful in results. It gives Ireland one reason and one argument the more on which to found her demand for autonomy; for an actual experience of government has developed her public spirit and her practical sense, and has trained

7 The gloomy pictures (somewhat too gloomy indeed) of municipal corruption painted by Edward Martyn in *A Tale of a Town* (1902), and by George Moore in *The Bending of the Bough*, refer back to the period before 1898.

8 *Cf. Hansard*, May 24th, 1900, and August 9th, 1901.

up a corps of administrators. For, as has been well said, the local councils are the primary schools of freedom. Local Government has given Ireland at the same time a new weapon for the enforcement of her claims, a point of support and a lever with which to operate against the Castle, and a permanent organization which may one day, perhaps, render political "leagues" superfluous. It has, in short, increased tenfold the political power of Ireland, and dislodged England from one of her most formidable positions in the Sister Island.

IV.—The Police.

England meantime retains a firm hold of one instrument of government, which is, perhaps, the most necessary to her of all, the police.[1] It is very doubtful whether the Constabulary in question ought to be called a police force at all. It consists of 12,000 men, or rather of 12,000 soldiers, armed with carbines and bayonets, and disposed through the country in a thousand or fifteen hundred fortified posts. These "police stations" are regular blockhouses, situated in strong strategic positions, and defended by iron doors and shutters. The picture contrasts strangely with that popular institution of Great Britain, the corpulent and legendary "bobby," with his paternal airs and his readiness to oblige, and a truncheon for sole symbol of authority! The Constabulary in Ireland is a military force, an army of occupation encamped in a conquered country. It is a supplementary corps of the regular army which is stationed in Ireland as a main guarantee of the security of British rule.

The Irish police force differs from the English in being an imperial service. It is controlled by the Castle, and maintained out of the Imperial Treasury; but the annual

[1] *Cf.* Comte de Franqueville, *Le Système Judiciaire de la Grande Bretagne*, Paris, 1893. *Hansard*, May 4th, 1901; March 1st and 14th, 1902; and July 10th, 1902.

charge is, of course, debited to Ireland, and the burden falls on the shoulders of the Irish tax-payer. The local bodies which, in Great Britain, exercise the control and bear the cost of the police,[2] are charged with neither of these functions in Ireland. This does not, however, prevent the Castle from punishing a "disturbed district" by first making it liable for half the cost of the extra police sent there, and then striking a levy on it for all non-accidental injuries to persons or property. This is done under the law of Compensation for Criminal Injuries, and is the source of great abuse.[3] Under imperial control the Irish police force has increased steadily, both in numbers and in cost, since its foundation by Sir Robert Peel[4] in 1836. Ireland has one constable for every 362 inhabitants, England has one for every 541, Scotland one for every 885. If we leave out of count the two capitals, London and Dublin, we find that while the cost of the English police is 2s. 3d. per head of the population, the figure for Ireland is 6s. 7d. The police in Scotland cost £400,000, in Ireland £1,300,000.[5] Does this mean that there is a greater degree of criminality in Ireland? The case is quite the contrary; and nothing could be falser than the prejudice which paints Ireland as a pandemonium

2 In England the police are a county service under the control of a joint committee of Justices of the Peace and County Councillors. (De Franqueville, I., 570).

3 Compensation is awarded at the expense of the ratepayers in all such cases of injuries in which there is malice or presumption of malice. Claims are heard before the County Court Judge, sitting without a jury, with an appeal only to the Assize Judge. Judicial interpretation of the vague term, "criminal injuries," has been pressed to an extravagant point. If a few Dublin gamins amuse themselves breaking windows the city has to pay compensation to the owner of the windows. In England the principle of public indemnification is conceded only in regard to damage resulting from riot or unlawful assembly. The police in Ireland are awarded large sums by way of compensation for personal injuries. In 1901 the account was £14,000, in 1902 £8,000, in 1903 £6,125. *Cf.* Grand Jury Act (1836); Malicious Injuries (Ireland) Acts (1848 and 1853); *Merchant Shipping Act* (1894), sec. 515; Local Government (Ireland) Act (1898), sec. 5.

4 The Irish police are popularly called *peelers*. In 1841, with a population of more than 8 millions there were 7,400 police; in 1901, with a population of 4½ millions, there were 12,000 police (including the 1,000 men of the Dublin Metropolitan Police).

5 *Thom*, 1903; *Hansard*, July 10th, 1902.

of brigands and assassins. There is no professional criminal class in Ireland. There may have been a considerable volume of crime during the agrarian war, but I do not know a country in Europe in which the figures are lower in normal times. In 1901, for instance, an average year, there were in England 38 convictions for every 100,000 inhabitants, in Scotland 41, and in Ireland only 27. Every year sees the closing of some unused prison, and at the Assizes, as often as not, the Judge receives from the Sheriff the traditional pair of white gloves which indicate that his white hands will not have to be raised in passing sentence on any one.

The chief business of the Irish police is to uphold landlordism. As soon as a case of agrarian warfare is reported, the police occupy the district with their net-work of espionage and inquisition. It is their function to attend popular demonstrations, and take shorthand notes of the speeches, and, when the meeting is arbitrarily proclaimed, to disperse it, batoning the recalcitrant crowd, and, by preference, Members of Parliament, if any are present.[6] The police also "protect" persons boycotted or intimidated, landlords, agents, grabbers or land-thieves, and the like. These latter constitute quite a special class in the countryside. Sometimes the protection is intermittent by means of rounds and patrols, sometimes permanent by means of police-huts close to the house of the "patient," the latter being forbidden to go anywhere without his escort. Some hundreds of persons are "protected" in this way every year; the number has sometimes exceeded a thousand, and there is an instance of one man who was under police protection for twenty years! Night and day the police are at the disposition of the landlords to intimidate the peasants, or to lend military support to seizures and evictions. However cruel and inhuman, even in the opinion of the Castle, the

[6] In 1889, at Ennis a policeman begged pardon for batoning an *Irish Times* reporter whom he mistook for a Member of Parliament! (N. MacDonagh, *The Book of Parliament*, 1897).

"legal" operations may be for which police assistance is demanded, the Castle has no right to refuse this assistance. Such is the jurisprudence of the High Court of Justice.[7]

Is it matter for astonishment to find Irishmen willing to adopt the trade of protectors of landlordism, the Castle, and the whole English system in Ireland, in such numbers that the rank and file of the police are in great part composed of the sons of Catholic and Nationalist peasants? The Extremists loudly denounce these "janissaries" of Ireland, call for their condemnation by public opinion, and declare that there never was a conquered country that furnished its conquerors with such an army of mercenaries. On the other hand, the bulk of the people, who have been taught by slavery, poverty, and the mere necessities of life to temper their anti-English feeling with a certain leaven of practical opportunism, show no great anger against the police for "taking service under the oppressor." "If our sons did not join," they say, "would not England at once import twelve thousand Englishmen to do the work? In that case we should only have helped to Anglicise and Protestantise Ireland a little more." In fact if people have no hesitation about denouncing publicly the "Castle police" the individual constables are not regarded with any very severe eye. They are, moreover, for the most part, honest fellows, sober and disciplined, although characterised by certain traits of authoritarian brutality, impressed on them by long servitude, accentuated by the fighting temper of the country, and aggravated most of all by the influence of the officers. It must be said that the spirit with which the police are inspired by those in command is one of a deplorable and arbitrary provocativeness. Is it necessary to recall certain orders issued from the Castle in times of trouble, the "Don't hesitate to shoot," of 1887,[8] or Forster's instructions with regard to

7 It over-ruled Sir M. Hicks Beach on this point in 1886, and Mr. John Morley in 1893. The former was Conservative Chief Secretary!

8 Issued in 1887 under Mr. Arthur Balfour. A similar instruction had been issued in 1882. (*Annual Register*, 1882, p. 187).

the use of buckshot ? [9] Even in normal times the police are excited beyond the bounds of prudence ; there is a continual demand for "incidents," for Ireland must not, it appears, be tranquil ! It is this which gives rise to such frequent scenes of police violence, dispersals of meetings, and baton-charges on inoffensive crowds which offer such a striking contrast to the patience and self-restraint of the police in England. There are unhappily other causes of a graver character. Ninety-nine out of every hundred constables are honest fellows. But the hundredth is a scoundrel who, seeing that he has everything to gain and nothing to lose by "incidents," provokes or invents such "incidents" and sometimes sends innocent persons to prison for them. One Talbot, for instance, in County Tipperary, induced young men to join secret societies so that he might afterwards have the pleasure of "informing" against them. Chief Constable Whelehan, through the medium of an accomplice, incited a gang of evil-doers to make an attack on a house at night, and then surprised them in the act. His colleague, Sergeant Sullivan, attempted the same manœuvre at Westport in 1902. As for Sergeant Sheridan, he went still further. Aided by two or three accomplices, he set fire to haggards, and killed or mutilated cattle, and then proceeded to arrest for these crimes innocent persons whom he succeeded in sending to prison or to penal servitude. Whenever Sheridan was moved to a new post there was an increase of crime, or at least of arrests for crime, for which he was commended. In 1901 all was discovered, and Sheridan fled the country before the issue of a warrant against him.[10] What are we to say of a government which, while professing to be the guardian,

9 He was called after it *Buckshot Forster*.

10 The Government did not dare to prosecute Sheridan, for fear, as it is said, of revelations. He was allowed to quit the country, and two of his accomplices and accusers left the service with "compassionate allowances" of £50 and £200 respectively (more, that is to say, than Sheridan's victims received by way of compensation). See *Hansard*, July 24th, 1902, and October 20th, 1902.

and the sole guardian, of "law and order," covers away such base scandals under the cloak of "law and order" as to produce a state of affairs which, in the words of a recent English writer, is like a "glance into Hell?" Could such scandals arise at all if those who are charged with the administration of justice did their duty?

V.—Justice: The Lower Courts.

The legal system of Ireland, looked at from the outside and from a distance, seems a very faithful copy of the legal system of England. It is apparently based on the same guiding principles and exhibits the same general traits. The judges of the High Court, rather few in number, enjoying handsome salaries and not removable by the Government, exercise a preponderating influence. The judge sits alone in a great many cases; there is no public department charged with the direction of civil actions, and in criminal proceedings direct prosecution at the suit of an individual is always possible. The jury must be unanimous in its verdict, and is employed in many matters which, in France, would be dealt with summarily by a Court of Correction. A jury is sworn in a civil cause if the parties think it worth while; there are no "tribunaux administratifs"; law is, on the whole, expensive.[1] . . . . . The entire system seems at first sight closely modelled on that of Great Britain, but when you look more intimately into its working it turns out to be not a copy but a sufficiently gross caricature. It is another proof that the best institutions in the world are worth only as much as the men who direct them, and that laws are of very little value unless they are supported by custom and public practice.

Of all the judicial institutions of Great Britain the most original and characteristic is the Justice of the Peace,

[1] *Cf.* Comte De Franqueville, *Le Système Judiciaire de la Grande-Bretagne*, Paris, 1893, II., p. 621 to 639.

of whom England is particularly proud. Criminal justice in all minor matters is entrusted, except in the large towns, to these unpaid magistrates, who are appointed by the Lord Chancellor, and are, for the most part, landowners, great or small.[2] If the feudal system has not in England prevented a landlord from being an impartial judge it is because of England's strong sense of national unity, and her tradition of public spirit and service. In Ireland, on the contrary, the landlords, as the descendants of the Anglo-Saxon spoilers, are separated from the people by a threefold barrier, historical, political and religious. Whether he be landlord or agent, the Irish Justice of the Peace is apt to exhibit undue harshness towards a Nationalist, and in Ulster, at any rate, undue favouritism towards an Orange delinquent. Selected from a very small class, and for reasons of politics, he often shows a great lack of professional capacity.[3] "If you find a magistrate able to state a case," said Baron Dowse, "you ought to send him to the British Museum! You might as well ask them to write a Greek ode."[4] Absenteeism, that special plague of the Irish gentry, raises a further obstacle to the due discharge of the judicial function which is so dear to the English country gentleman. They refuse to serve, or they serve badly; and as a consequence it has been found necessary to strengthen the Irish Justices of the Peace by tutors and deputies unknown in England. At Quarter Sessions the County Court Judge of the district, while nominally acting only as Chairman, in reality does all the work. For Petty Sessions the Lord Lieutenant has the right to appoint,[5] and in fact does appoint where he thinks necessary, stipendiary and removable Resident Magistrates

[2] Chairmen of County and Rural District Councils are *ex-officio* Justices of the Peace. There are more than 5,000 "J.P.'s" in Ireland, the landlords being in a great majority.

[3] In May, 1904, at Ballinasloe Petty Sessions, two women were sent to jail for a month with hard labour for the theft of a sack of turf. (*Hansard*, May 24th, 1904. Answer to a question of Mr. John Roche).

[4] *Hansard*, July 5th, 1888.

[5] *Constabulary Act* of 1836 (6 and 7 William IV., c. 13).

who, whether they sit alone or with the Justices of the Peace, really control the courts of summary jurisdiction.

These Resident Magistrates, wholly dependent on the Government, like our French *juges de paix*, but endowed with much wider powers—they can inflict a sentence of six months' imprisonment—constitute an entirely foreign element in the magistracy of the United Kingdom. The exception made in their case to the great principle of judicial independence appears all the more deplorable, in view of the fact that they are really police officers as well as magistrates. For the most part they are retired police inspectors, military officers, or simply sons of landlords and government officials, all anti-Nationalist in feeling and of very questionable competence.[6] As magistrates they have the authority of the Lord Lieutenant to direct all the operations of the police. This is the sorry pass to which the great principle of the separation of powers has come in Ireland; and it need hardly be said that in times of disturbance the system gives rise to the greatest scandals. In 1882 Mr. Clifford Lloyd, on arriving in Kilmallock, started to thrash, with his stick, people who were not "moving along" quickly enough! To send such a man into a disturbed district, was assuredly, as one of his colleagues declared, to provoke bloodshed. In 1887, Mr. Roche, at Tralee, sentenced a political "agitator" to six months' imprisonment, and when the people cheered the prisoner, ordered a police charge on the instant. In the same year he attended *en amateur* the famous Vandeleur evictions; and, the operations being concluded, had those who resisted eviction brought before him, tried them, seated on a wall with his hat on

6 Major Rolleston called in question on one occasion the legal principle that a prisoner should be presumed to be innocent until proved guilty. Major Traill explained, by way of excuse, that he had had no "legal training"! (T. P. O'Connor, *The Parnell Movement*, chs. 16 and 11). The Government did not exercise any very rigid scrutiny of candidates for the Resident Magistracy. Among the many "undesirables" appointed were a former officer, who had been dismissed his regiment, an official who had been dismissed from a post in the Birmingham police, and a former captain of infantry from the Cape, who had been hunted for breach of trust.

his head, and sent them straight to prison. The sentences in these cases were determined, not by the gravity of the offence, but by the "need for making examples." In 1888, in County Clare, certain peasants were sent to jail for from two to four months for refusing to sell turf to the police.[7] In 1902 members of the United Irish League received sentences of great harshness for attempts at "intimidation" which had been without effect; journalists for articles which were, perhaps, somewhat heated but quite general in their terms and not directed against any individual; simple peasants for having spontaneously and without violence "boycotted" a grazier in the market, or hissed a grabber. Two Members of Parliament were, in the same year, sent to prison for three and four months respectively for having at a meeting at Caltra, in County Galway, conspired with divers other persons unknown, illegally to compel divers person unknown to surrender divers lands unknown, and incited divers other persons unknown, to do likewise!

There was never a speech delivered in Ireland on the land question but would come within the scope of such an indictment. Instances of vindictive severity could be multiplied. During the Coercion crisis of 1901-2 the Resident Magistrates took to increasing their sentences for political offences by the addition of hard labour. This meant three days a month on a diet of bread and water and fifteen nights on the plank bed; and the sentence carried with it five years' disqualification for membership of the local Councils. In 1887 and 1888 the Resident Magistrates, in order to deprive their victims of the right of appeal—allowable only when the sentence exceeded one month—adopted the practice of giving cumulative sentences of one month each on several different counts. Such were the men to whom was entrusted the administration of such a law as the Coercion Act. Is it a matter for wonder that in the eyes of the Irish people these judges were no judges at all, but mere agents of the

7 *Annual Register*, 1888, p. 100, 121.

Castle, and that the "justice" which they dispensed was regarded as a mere legal farce?

But the strangest and most abused power of all was that which they exercised under the Common Law, rendered explicit in a Statute of the year 1361 (34 Edward III.). This Act gives to all magistrates, and by consequence, of course to Resident Magistrates, the power to require bail to be of good behaviour from "all that be not of good fame,"[8] and if bail be refused to send the person summoned to prison for a period of time which is left to the discretion of the magistrate. There is no jury, and no right of appeal; it is not necessary for the Crown, nor competent for the person summoned to produce witnesses, for, as the legal writers say, it is a question not of punishment but of prevention. It is the alternative, as the phrase runs in Ireland, of "Bail" or "Jail." This power is possessed, it is true, by magistrates in England, and is exercised by them in about a thousand cases in the course of a twelvemonth.[9] But in England it is used only against vagabonds, persons who can give no account of themselves and are a menace to the public peace. In Ireland the Resident Magistrates use it as a weapon against politicians, members of the League, and popular orators. Moreover, they add a rule of bail to ordinary sentences—a thing which is never done in England—so that a prisoner, if he refuses to find bail, has his sentence doubled. More amazing still, the power of "Bail" or "Jail" is enforced against defendants who have been found innocent of charges preferred against them. One and the same sentence declares that they are not guilty of any offence, and orders them to find bail to be of good conduct for the future! It is in truth, as English Liberals declared in Parliament when these facts were

8 The "not" was by a curious accident omitted from the old Statute. The Act of 1361 was extended to Ireland *ipso facto* by Poynings' Law in 1495. *Cf. Law Times*, June 28th, 1902. Comte De Franqueville, II., 280.

9 Between 1893 and 1901 there were 9,434 cases in England, 6,398 in Ireland. (*Hansard*, June 25th, 1902).

made known in debate, a caricature of justice, a travesty of law; *summum jus summa injuria.*[10]

VI.—The Judges of the Superior Courts.

From the Justice of the Peace and the Resident Magistrate we pass to the County Courts and the High Court. Here at least we find judges, in the real sense of the word, invested, as in England, with a large measure of dignity and independence, invested also with very important powers and responsibilities in virtue of that "glorious uncertainty of the law" which affords the Anglo-Saxon such profound gratification. Let us hasten to say, however, that the English judiciary differs very widely from the Irish judiciary in origin and consequently in character. In England politicians are certainly not without saying their word with regard to appointments. But a judge is chosen as a settled rule only from among the leaders of the Bar, and the moment he assumes his high office he puts behind him party differences. It would be difficult to find anywhere a body of men so high in character, so superior to prejudice and passion, and so deeply imbued with the spirit of impartiality as the English Bench. Politics, on the contrary, play the chief rôle in judicial appointments in Ireland. Whether they are chosen from the ranks of the Irish Unionist Party in Parliament, or from the Crown Prosecutors at the Bar,[1] they obtain advancement as the price of services

[10] *Hansard*, March 13th, 1902. The magistrate's power of "Bail or Jail" is also possessed *a fortiori* by the King's Bench, though it adds little to the dignity of that Court. It has been exercised by the King's Bench in three cases during the last twenty-five years:—(1) R. *v.* Davitt, Healy and Quinn in 1882; (2) R. *v.* Dillon, 1886 (Bail in £2,000 or six months imprisonment); (3) R. *v.* William Redmond and Lynam in 1902.

[1] Contrary to English practice the Crown in Ireland has on every Circuit its titular and permanent *Crown Counsel* or *Crown Prosecutor*. Nomination to this position is the first step up in every successful legal career; but, to secure it, a repudiation of all national and patriotic ideas is necessary. This is a repudiation which many of the most talented young men refuse to make, although they know that they thereby close against themselves the path of promotion.

rendered or pledges given to the Castle; Judgeships are part of the spoils of political victory.[2] This does not mean that there are not to be found among them men of high moral worth and great conscientiousness. Such men they have always had from Fox and Fletcher who, at the beginning of the nineteenth century publicly denounced the unjust treatment of Ireland, to Baron Fitzgerald, who, in 1881, retired rather than join in enforcing Mr. Gladstone's Coercion Act. To-day people in Ireland tell you that a dozen judges of the stamp of Chief Baron Palles would be of greater value to the country than any possible legislative reforms. The decencies and amenities of life have advanced greatly in Irish courts of law. Public opinion would not now endure ermined brutes like Norbury, violent partisans like Chief Justice Pennefeather who tried O'Connell, or fanatical Calvinists like Lefroy who used the Bench as a pulpit of proselytism. Nor are there to be found any longer eccentrics like Baron Smith, who was accustomed to hold his court by candle-light, or incompetents like the Judge Day of whom Curran said that his attempts to understand a law point "resembled an attempt to open an oyster with a rolling-pin."

But it cannot be denied that even now the Irish judges, chosen as they are from a close oligarchy, do not succeed very well in forgetting their prejudices—racial, religious, and political—on accession to office, and that their judgments often bear the trace of unconscious bias. Their rectitude, uprightness, and personal honour are not in question, but perfect impartiality is a condition to which they do not often attain. Their minds have been, as one might say, folded in such deep crinkles of partizanship that it is not possible for them to become on the morrow of promotion, neutral and indifferent umpires of law, capable of commanding confidence and of

2 A prominent advocate in England loses heavily, an advocate in Ireland gains heavily, in point of income by elevation from the Bar to the Bench. *Cf.* Comte De Franqueville, p. 378, 391.

justifying it. It must be added that as things stand in Ireland promotion does not carry them out of politics; they do not cease to attend the Viceroy's Court at the Castle, and many of them, as members of the Privy Council, take a direct share in the conduct of public affairs. The grip of politics upon them never lessens. They deliver attacks by times from the Bench on the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Nationalist Leagues. In 1890 at Galway Assizes, for instance, Judge Harrison asked in open court why the loyalists of Ireland had not had recourse to lynch law. In 1880 Judge May, who was to try Parnell, delivered before the trial such violent diatribes against the Nationalist leader as to find himself compelled by the consequent public protests to take no part in the trial. A certain County Court Judge, lately deceased, made a speciality of assailing in the *Times*, and, in the great English reviews, the Irish policy of the Government. He was accustomed, both in these journals and from the Judicial Bench, to denounce as "immoral and confiscatory" the agrarian laws which it was his duty to administer. It is a common practice with Judges at Assizes to deliver harangues to the Grand Juries representing the country as dangerously disturbed, and calling for coercion. "It is a monstrous thing," said John Morley on one occasion, "that Irish judges should be permitted, by public opinion, to build up cases by their language for the application of coercion enactments." [3]

At the actual trial of cases the language and bearing of the Irish judge often show a very unfavourable contrast to the correct and dignified demeanour of his English confrere. We are no longer, it is true, in the days in which, as Beaumont wrote in 1837, "judge and jury treated the prisoner on trial as a sort of idolatrous savage, an enemy who must be destroyed, a criminal marked out in advance for punishment,"[4] or in which

3 *Hansard*, January 24th, 1902.
4 *De Beaumont*, I., 261.

Macaulay, describing the proceedings against O'Connell, could find no fitter comparison than the methods of the Star Chamber. Even at present, however, it is a far from unusual thing to see the Judge join forces with the Crown Prosecutor where an English judge would interfere to prevent a defendant from being unfairly pressed. He does not scruple to level public insult at a man who has been acquitted. He will fight the prisoner's counsel angrily step by step. He will autocratically tell the jury that they are bound by their oaths to bring in a verdict of guilty, and if they do not do so, will abuse them, and send them back to their room three or four times in the hope of forcing them to submission. Finally, the judge's summing up, which, in England is a "model of impartiality and fair play,"[5] is too often in Ireland a mere speech for the prosecution.

We have to take account also of the fact that the Irish judge is not under the restraint of that invaluable check, the duty of giving formal reasons in justification of the sentence passed. He is invested by old custom with a quasi-discretionary jurisdiction which he is constantly tempted to abuse. What is known as Contempt of Court affords an instance in point. At Common Law a judge has power to summon before him any person guilty of Contempt of Court, to impose on him a fine, the amount of which is not limited by law, or send him to jail. There is no jury and no right of appeal; indeed the Sovereign himself can exercise no prerogative of pardon in such a case. This arbitrary and dangerous power[6] gave rise in England, in former times, to such deplorable abuses that an English judge now has recourse to it only with the greatest circumspection.

5 Comte De Franqueville, II., 687. The conduct of the Crown Prosecutors is, of course, still worse than that of the Judges. (*Cf. Hansard*, July 10th, 1902). In England when a criminal prosecution has not, after a second re-trial, resulted in a conviction, proceedings are dropped; in Ireland, on the contrary, the Crown presses matters much farther. Gavan Duffy, *e.g.*, was tried five times for the same offence in 1849. (*Four Years of Irish History*, p. 750-755).

6 Comte De Franqueville, II., 30.

In Ireland there are no such scruples; fine and imprisonment are often imposed for the same offence, and delinquents are sent to jail for an indefinite period, a proceeding which is quite contrary to the English practice and is very strongly condemned by English lawyers. An Irish judge will have no hesitation in applying the law of contempt in a case which would be laughed out of Court in England.[7] The two most famous cases of Contempt of Court proceedings in Ireland are that of Dwyer Gray, proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal*, who was fined £500 and imprisoned for three months in the year 1882 for publishing an article reflecting on the improper behaviour of a number of jurymen during the intervals of trials; and that of Father Kelleher, of Youghal, who was punished in this fashion in 1887 for refusing to give evidence, although his refusal was based on the ground of professional secrecy.

With such a personnel and practice, from Justice of the Peace up to Judge of the High Court, as Ireland has received from her liberal rulers, it is not easy to understand what need there is of exceptional laws. One is impelled to ask what has become of *Magna Charta* and *habeas corpus* under the regime of Bail or Jail and Contempt of Court? But there is something more. How does the institution of Trial by Jury in criminal cases fare under that system of manipulation which is commonly known in Ireland as "Jury Packing"?

VII.—Jury Packing.[1]

This is a long-established practice, a survival of the days of the Penal Laws. It means in every case in which there is a political, agrarian, or religious issue at stake

[7] The *Land Judge's Court* is particularly notorious. Many attempts have been made to limit contempt of court jurisdiction, including a Bill introduced in the Session of 1908. *Cf.* case of Mr. Laurence Ginnell M.P. (1907). *Hansard*, April 4th, 1906.

[1] Perraud, I., 115 *et seq.* *Hansard*, May 3rd and May 15th, 1901.

the trial of a Catholic Nationalist by a Protestant Unionist jury, that is to say, by his social and confessional adversaries, to the exclusion of his Catholic and Nationalist fellows. This was its character in England under Strafford and in Ireland until quite recent times. The Sheriff in preparing the jury-panel (the Sheriff acting, of course, on behalf of Dublin Castle) excluded from it the names of Catholics, or, if he included them, did it in such a fashion as to prevent any of them being drawn from the urn. An Act, due to Lord O'Hagan, having deprived the Sheriff of his discretionary power in the preparation of the panel, recourse was then had to an old tradition of the Common Law which gives the Crown the right to exclude from the jury any person who may not be impartial or indifferent. The Crown effects this by ordering the juror to "stand by." This must not be confounded with the right of "challenge";[2] it is a superior and sovereign right which the Crown uses through its counsel without being obliged to explain its motives or its reasons. It exists in England, but has not been exercised there since 1857.[3] In Ireland, on the contrary, it is a normal and every-day procedure, employed in order to exclude from the actual jury such Catholic Nationalists as may have been drawn by lot. As a Celtic and Papist name—some Sullivan, Sheehy, Condon, Walsh, Donovan, Clery or Lynch—is drawn from the urn, the representative of the Crown pronounces his sacramental "Stand by." The O's and the Mac's are marked out in advance for this treatment. On the other hand, if you

2 The prisoner is entitled to six *challenges* in a case of misdemeanour, and twenty in a case of felony. This classification of offences, we may add, is quite arbitrary, and has the effect in Ireland, at all events in certain cases, of restricting greatly the traverser's power of rejecting jurors. The Crown has no right of peremptory *challenge*, but an unlimited right of *stand-by*. A juror to whom the Crown objects is ordered, that is to say, to stand by, and is not called a second time unless the jury-panel should be exhausted before a complete jury is found. As the panel is a long one this very seldom happens.

3 *Hansard*, May 3rd, 1901, p. 662. Sometimes, but very rarely, in England the name of a juror against whom there are grave objections is omitted by the Clerk of the Court in reading the panel, this being done on private representations from the Crown.

are a Smith, Wilson, Fox or Green, good English names, you are held worthy to serve on the jury.

It is no rare thing to see fifty "Stand-by's" in a case, or even more. The Papists are called up in court like the rest, but are then excluded, a game which is very easy to play in a country in which a man's politics and religion are, so to say, written in his name. Three-quarters of a century after Emancipation the "Papists" are still branded as unfit to exercise the privilege of citizenship, they are marked and "parked" as incapables and criminals. It is easy to see the degradation to which justice is brought by this system under a false show of legality. Trial by Jury, the palladium of British liberty, becomes, in Lord Denman's often quoted phrase, "a mockery, a delusion and a snare."[4] The Crown arbitrarily selects its own jury, and it selects it from among the loyalists; that is to say, the anti-Nationalists. The Protestants are tried by their friends, the Catholics by their enemies. "My Lords," said John Martin, "I consider that I have not yet been tried. There have been certain formalities carried on here regarding me, ending in a verdict of guilty. But I have not yet been put upon my country, as the constitution said to exist in Ireland requires. Twelve of my countrymen, 'indifferently chosen,' have not been put into that jury-box to try me, but twelve men who I believe have been selected by the parties who represent the Crown for the purpose of convicting and not of trying me."

English Liberals condemn jury-packing, as it deserves to be condemned. But this does not prevent its being used by every government, Liberal or Conservative, as a normal wheel of the judicial machine; it functions under Mr. Morley as under Mr. Balfour. This is a conclusive proof, say its apologists, that it is indispensable if justice is to be done in Ireland; you cannot abandon jury-packing, because "popular" juries fail in their duty of

4 In 1843, *apropos* of the trial of O'Connell. (*Cf. Young Ireland.* By Sir C. G. Duffy, p. 517).

convicting culprits. They bring in acquittals out of sympathy with the criminal, if, not indeed, with crime itself, for they have been constantly taught that crime is not crime and law is not law. They acquit also out of fear. In many instances there is organised intimidation on the part of the Press and of public opinion; in troubled times witnesses and jurors alike are under the menace of the moonlighters.[5] The real jury-packers, declared a recent Conservative Attorney-General, are the political leaders and their adherents. The Crown does not, he went on—reviving an argument put forward by Lord John Russell in 1848—exclude Catholics, *qua* Catholics, or Nationalists, *qua* Nationalists; it simply excludes individuals who are not impartial, and who, in its judgment, would refuse to find a verdict according to their consciences. It is the duty of the Crown to exclude anyone whose object is to hamper the operation of the law. Our desire is to have really free men as jurors, and far from perverting the jury system we are its true guardians!

Follow your argument out to the end, the Nationalists replied. You exclude partisans, in order to put on partisans of another colour. You exclude everybody who might be prejudiced in favour of the accused, but you empanel those who are prejudiced against him. When you have had him tried by his enemies, and so made an acquittal impossible, is your "justice" very much the purer for it? No! The medicine is worse than the disease. If you regard the demand for a unanimous verdict as too much—and unanimity is often merely obtained through the weakness or exhaustion of the minority—abolish it, and adopt the Scotch and Continental system of the majority verdict. Or even abolish altogether this hypocrisy of trial by jury,[6] if need be, in regard to certain offences, but at least cease to

5 *Cf.* Ph. Daryl, *Les Anglais en Irlande*, p. 117 to 121.

6 The phrase was used by Sir R. Reid, now Lord Chancellor of England. (*Hansard*, May 4th, 1901).

poison the very wells of justice and to mask illegality under legal forms . . . . .

One thing is at any rate certain. Jury-packing, depriving the accused as it does of the elementary guarantees of justice, has led to the conviction of many innocent men. More than one case is on record in which innocent men have even, on the advice of their counsel, pleaded guilty because they knew that conviction was certain' and that their sole hope was the clemency of the judge. As an instance of these miscarriages of justice, we may, perhaps, cite the celebrated Maamtrasna Case (1882). An innocent man, Myles Joyce, was convicted by a packed jury and hanged; and three other Joyces, also most probably innocent, were sent to penal servitude for twenty years. But a still graver evil, if that be possible among the many which result from jury-packing, is the feeling, deeply rooted in the mind of the Irish peasant, that the twelve jurors, seated up there in their box, have been chosen, not to try him, but to convict him if he chance to be a Catholic Nationalist. Justice is a luxury reserved for his Protestant Unionist neighbour. The whole practice of the Courts tends to deepen this feeling. If the Irishman is deficient in a sense of respect for law and justice, the reason of this is not any deformity of character, any instinct of savagery or lawlessness. "There is no nation or people," said an English lawyer, Sir John Davies, in the seventeenth century, "under the sun that doth love equal or indifferent justice better than the Irish."[7]

Oppression, evil institutions, and unjust "justice," have destroyed their confidence in the law and its representatives, and in many cases have clouded the idea of equity in the inner depths of conscience itself.

Unpacked juries may, indeed, in many instances acquit where they ought to convict, but the reason is obvious. They do so as a protest against the inequitable character

7 *Discovery*, p. 213.

and perverse administration of the law. The harsher the law and the more partial the judge, the readier they are to acquit.

The celebrated Tallow case is an instance in point. Two trials had taken place without any conclusive result, but when the case came before Chief Baron Palles, the impartial judge *par excellence* of the Irish Bench, the jury had no difficulty in finding a verdict against the defendants. We may, perhaps, quote another case. At Belfast a few years ago a jury had acquitted a prisoner who was manifestly guilty. As the jury were leaving the court the foreman said to a barrister friend of ours : "Why yes ! We acquitted ! When the judge is prejudiced, we always do acquit."

Is there a remedy for this condition of things. A way out of the vicious circle ? There is only one way out, and that is to bring the institutions of the country into harmony with the aspirations of the people.

The jury system, after all, has another function to discharge, besides that of determining questions of fact in criminal causes ; it is the prime guarantee of public liberty, the supreme judge of laws and institutions. If juries systematically refuse to convict, it is because there is some disease in the social organism which calls for the knife of the political surgeon. When juries in England deliberately refused to convict a guilty person as a protest against the inhumanity of criminal law, there was general admiration for the courage of men who, by these tactics, compelled Parliament to amend the law.[8] In Ireland, instead of hearkening to the lesson of the jury-boxes, government "purifies" the jury and corrupts the whole institution. Why do they not reform the law rather than degrade it by jury-packing ?

8 *E.g.* as regards the law of libel. On the point see *Hansard*, May 3rd, 1901, p. 671.

VIII.

From whatever point of view we envisage the English government in Ireland we are confronted with the same appearance of constitutional forms, masking a state of things which is a compound of autocracy, oppression and corruption. We shall not say, with Lord Morris, that "it is the history of a very stupid people trying to govern a very clever people against its will." [1] It is a despotism that lies behind this ornamental legality, a despotism without many scruples and but little mitigated by the ineffective protest of the eighty Nationalist Members of Parliament, that Ireland numbers amongst the 670 Members of whom the British Parliament is composed. Between a small nation and a great, between a conquered people and its conqueror, there can be but a sham Union, "the union," in Byron's words, "of a boa constrictor with its prey." There can be but one issue of such a union, a nation badly governed, and a government badly obeyed.

Most certainly there is something rotten in the system of which Dublin Castle is the centre. Nothing flourishes, nothing develops under its yoke. It has poisoned the political atmosphere, and given public spirit over to corruption. It paralyses all initiative, every desire of progress, every idea of justice. It blasts everything it touches; for the first demand which it makes on a young Irishman, anxious to fill a part in the public service, is that he should turn his back on his beliefs, religious and political. It is the main agent of demoralization, for as has been well said, when the people does not fashion the government, the government fashions the people. Detested by Nationalist Ireland it is also denounced even by Unionists of liberal tendencies. Three successive Under-Secretaries, Sir R. Hamilton, Sir Redvers Buller,

[1] Ruskin described it as the case of witty people who will never allow themselves to be governed by people who are the reverse. (*Pall Mall Gazette*, January 5th, 1886).

and Sir West Ridgeway[2] have put on record their condemnation of the "Castle" system over which they had presided. Can it be reformed? Would it be possible to make the Castle government a good government, and the Union a reality and an advantage? The answer given by the experience of a century is, No! Thomas Drummond, the great Scotchman, tried and failed. Sir Antony MacDonnell has had but little better success. The cause of failure is plainly this, that an English government in Ireland will always find itself under the disastrous control of the "English in Ireland." The Garrison, the "Colony," will ever use it as a weapon in the war of the classes; however reconstructed, the Castle will remain the servant of the oligarchy. The only possible reform is a revolution, the revolution that would be effected by the introduction of the representative principle.

[2] See *Nineteenth Century Review*, August and October, 1906.

PART II.

MATERIAL DECADENCE

CHAPTER I.—THE LAND QUESTION[1]

THE Irish agrarian question dates its birth from the day when the first Anglo-Normans set foot there, and began to despoil the ancient clans of their land. It grew and increased throughout those long centuries during which England neglected not merely the government but even the conquest of Ireland, and contented herself with

[1] V. On the agrarian question: P. Fournier, *La Question Agraire en Irlande*, Paris, 1882. J. Flach, *Histoire du Règime Agraire de l'Irlande* (leçon d'ouverture faite au Collège de France), Paris, 1883. E. Ferré, *l'Irlande, Sa crise agraire et politique*, Paris, 1887. Et. Béchaux, *la Question Agraire en Irlande*, Paris, 1906. Meyer et Ardent, *la Question Agrarie*, 2nd edition, Paris, 1887. L. de Lavergne, *Essai sur l'Economie Rurale de l'Angleterre, de l'Ecosse et de l'Irlande*, Paris, 1864. Shaw Lefevre, *Agrarian Tenures*, London, 1893. Nisbet, *Land Tenure in Ireland*, Edinburgh, 1887. Montgomery, *The History of Land Tenure in Ireland*, Cambridge, 1889. Lord Dufferin, *Emigration and the Tenure of Irish Land*, London, 1867. Barry O'Brien, *Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland*, London, 1883. By the same, *Parliamentary History of the Irish Land Question*, London, 1881. Richey, *The Irish Land Laws*, London, 1881. Lord Russell of Killowen, *New Views on Ireland*, London, 1881. Antonio Pittaluga, *La Questione Agraria in Irlanda*, Roma, 1894. *Modern Ireland and her Agrarian Problem*, by Moritz Bonn, translated by T. W. Rolleston, Dublin, 1906. *The Case of the Irish Landlords, by one of them*, Dublin, 1899. O'Connor Morris, *Present Irish Questions*, London, 1901. Cherry, Wakely, and Maxwell, *The Irish Land Law and Land Purchase Acts*, 3rd edition, Dublin, 1902. *Cf.* the Reports (and evidence) of numerous Commissions of enquiry into the agricultural question, especially the *Devon Commission*, *Bessborough Commission*, *Cowper Commission*, *Morley Committee*, *Fry Commission*. *Cf.* the Annual Reports of the *Land Commission*. *Cf.* our communication to the Société d'Economie Sociale (Séance of Jan. 11th, 1904, *Réforme Sociale* of the following March 1st).

maintaining in that country a profitable state of anarchy, which prevented all progress, and which impeded the natural evolution from collective to individual property. But it is only when we reach the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the days of the Tudors, of Cromwell, and of William III., that the agrarian question begins, under the influence of the Plantations and the Penal Laws, to assume its modern shape, and to claim that melancholy pre-eminence which has lasted down to our own time.

I.—Historical.

Of all the past then, whether Celtic, Anglo-Norman, or even feudal, nothing remains by the end of the seventeenth century but the mere memory. With the reigns of William III. and Queen Anne a new state of things comes into being. The old Celtic tenure[2] has disappeared, just as, with a few exceptions, the clans themselves and the old Brehon laws have passed away. Confiscations and plantations have transferred the ownership of the soil into the hands of a small number of large proprietors or landlords. These new settlers, for the most part Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, have now beneath them, at their beck and call as holders of precarious tenancies, all the victims of both recent and former conquests. These latter, whether Celts by blood or Celticised strangers, have all alike sunk to the condition of helots. The Penal Laws are completing, as we have seen, the reduction to servitude of the Catholic masses. Papists are forbidden to buy land; they can take it on lease, but only for a term of under thirty years, and at a rent equal to not less than two-thirds of the produce of the soil. A reward is offered to anyone who reports a breach of these laws.[3] We come in this way to the birth of the new regime,

2 As regards Celtic tenure we can only refer our readers to the learned works of M. D'Arbois de Jubainville, Maine, O'Curry, etc.

3 2 Anne ch. 6, Sec. 2 (1703). *Cf.* Beaumont *op. cit.*, I., 95, etc.

which is by nature half agrarian and half political, and is the fruit of conquest, confiscation and persecution. It establishes a condition of things for which I believe no parallel could be found in the world, but which for nearly two centuries is to remain master of Ireland, namely, landlordism.

It places the mass of the tenants at the mercy of the landlord, who exploits them without mercy. There are few, if any, leases; the tenants hold the land by the year or even at will, at the discretion of the master. The result is complete insecurity. In his capacities of proprietor, judge and administrator, the landlord in reality has power of life and death over his tenants; he evicts them at will; fixes their leases at his pleasure; imposes rules upon them, tyrannical regulations, together with a whole system of fines and corporal penalties wherein are to be found the worst feudal exactions.[4] "The landlord of an Irish estate inhabited by Roman Catholics," writes Arthur Young,[5] "is a sort of despot who yields obedience, in whatever concerns the poor, to no law but that of his will."

One-third of the landlords are absentees, and Ireland is, as a consequence, left to middlemen who, renting their estates at a low price and for a long term of years, sublet them in portions to the peasants. Young denounces this class as "the vermin of the country." Under a regime of this nature, agriculture rapidly declines; the trees disappear off the face of the earth; at the beginning of the eighteenth century half Ireland is a desert, and down to the time of the Great Famine of 1847, famines are periodical. "The rise of our rents," says Swift, "is squeezed out of the very blood, and vitals, and clothes, and dwellings of the tenants, who live worse than English beggars." Why should we be astonished if the peasant then resorts to assassination as his method of defence

4 *Cf.* Cardinal Perraud *op. cit.*, I., 222, etc. T. P. O'Connor, *The Parnell Movement*, Chapter VI.

5 *Tour in Ireland*, II., 126.

and his hope of revenge? "Whiteboyism" is the only curb that "landlordism" has ever known; the one will last as long as the other, and "weighing one against the other," writes an English M.P., Mr. Poulett Scrope,[6] in 1844, "horror against horror, and crime against crime, it is, perhaps, the lesser evil of the two."

After the abrogation of the Penal Laws a lull occurs in the agrarian troubles of Ireland. Beginning at the end of the eighteenth century, it continues into the early years of the nineteenth, during the period of agricultural prosperity which came to the United Kingdom as one effect of the Napoleonic wars and the continental blockade. Cultivation regains its hold over these huge tracts which, during the eighteenth century, had been surrendered to pasture. The land is parcelled out; holdings are multiplied; and tenancies for life become more common, All these developments are encouraged by the landlords, who rejoice over the growth of their rent rolls, and, during those times of political serfdom, over the increased number of their voters. But a reaction is close at hand and a fresh crisis about to occur, for reasons that are now of common knowledge. First of all comes the fall in the price of agricultural produce after 1815, a fall intensified by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1847 which, combined with excessive sub-division of the land into small holdings, would seem, for a time,to make all cultivation unprofitable. Then we have the law of Catholic Emancipation of 1829, which withdraws the right to vote from freeholders with an income of forty shillings, that is to say, from the great majority of the tenants for life. By this measure the peasant is deprived of his best weapon against the landlord, and the landlord of all incentive to grant leases or multiply holdings. Matters come at length to a crisis; and a fearful crisis it is, accompanied by the Great Famine which lasts three years, and by the Clearances, which last thirty. Throughout the whole country the landlords level the fences, demolish the houses, and evict the

6 Barry O'Brien, *A Hundred Years of Irish History*, p. 64

peasants ; they "sweep out," in fact, all this population of starvelings who are only in their way, and put oxen and sheep in the place of human beings. *Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant.* All the better land is turned into pasture ; and, on what remains of the soil, the remnant of the peasants are allowed to huddle together. In a few months whole counties, such as Meath, or Tipperary, are depopulated, and changed into prairies like those of America. The *latifundia* extend farther than the eye can reach. In ten years 282,000 peasant homes are destroyed, and a million and a half of the Irish people cross the Atlantic. Between 1849 and 1860, according to Mulhall, the statistician, 373,000 Irish families are evicted,[7] numbering just about two million persons in all. The notices to quit keep falling, according to the well known saying of Gladstone, as thick as snow flakes. "In one union," according to Sir Robert Peel, "at a time of famine, within one year, 15,000 persons have been driven from their homes . . . . . ; I do not think the records of any country, civilised or barbarous, ever presented such scenes of horror." [8]

But what was England doing throughout all this period ? What steps was the Government taking in view of the gravity of this crisis ? None, unless it were to pass coercion laws. Already, in the year 1845, a great Commission of Enquiry, the Devon Commission, composed of Englishmen and landlords, had diagnosed the disease and suggested a treatment,[9] but its report was allowed to lie unopened. In 1850, the Tenants' League, the organization both of the north and of the south, issued a very moderate programme of reforms, based on a demand for the recognition of that tenant-right, which Gladstone afterwards sanctioned. "Tenant-right," replied Lord Palmerston, "is landlord wrong!" From 1829 to 1867, Parliament threw

7 *Dictionary of Statistics*, London, 1886, p. 175.

8 *Young Ireland*, by Sir C. G. Duffy, p. 239. *Cf. New Ireland* by A. M. Sullivan, Chap. XI.

9 *Vide* the extracts from its reports in Perraud I., 381 and following pp. *Cf. Young Ireland* of Sir C. Gavan Duffy, p. 640, etc.

out or strangled 23 bills in favour of the Irish peasant. To make up for this it passed two agrarian laws, liberal in appearance, but both very strongly marked with the tendencies of the time, that is to say, with the doctrines of the Manchester school, and fated in practice to do nothing but harm to Ireland.

The first was the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849. The Irish landlords, for their part, had not passed through the Great Famine without suffering, though in a less degree than the peasants. Their rents had fallen in value, and in some cases almost disappeared. Simultaneously there had occurred a rise in local taxation (poor rate) so serious as sometimes to absorb the whole rent. As a result about one-third of them had succumbed. Now, therefore, said the English economists, let us liquidate the past; let us clear off this dead weight, and open up the land market. Capital is the only force that can regenerate Ireland; then let us call into Ireland the capitalists of Great Britain. The outcome of these ideas was the Act of 1849, which established in Dublin a Court, known as the Encumbered Estates Court, whose function was to negotiate the sale of encumbered properties on the demand of creditors or even of the owners themselves, This tribunal, afterwards reorganised in 1858 under the name of the Landed Estates Court, with an enlarged jurisdiction and a permanent status, was finally incorporated in the Supreme Court in 1877 under the name of the Land Judge's Court. It was endowed with very wide powers, and at once proceeded to make a wide use of them. In less than ten years it had sold encumbered estates to the value of twenty millions sterling.[10] One-sixth of the soil of Ireland changed masters and passed into new hands. The new owners comprised eight or ten thousand "capitalists," men of

10 A. M. Sullivan, *New Ireland*, Ch. XII. This would have been a magnificent opportunity for the creation of a class of peasant proprietors, if British statesmen had not been trained from their youth to a prejudice against a system of small holdings.

business or rich townsmen, land jobbers and speculators. These *novi homines*, seeing that the law had provided no protection for the peasant, hastened to raise their rents to the highest possible limit in order to obtain the highest possible profit out of the transaction, and proceeded to exploit the tenants with a pitiless severity unknown under the ancient race of landlords. The new "Plantation" was, in reality, only another "confiscation," at the expense, firstly, of the landlords, who were expropriated at a miserable price, and, secondly, of the tenants, whose rights were appropriated by the newcomers.[11] The net result was merely a little more misery for Ireland.

The second piece of agrarian legislation voted by the British Parliament, Deasy's Act—Deasy being the name of its author—came into operation in 1860. It was destined, in spite of its equally good intentions, to produce equally deplorable results. Lawyers will tell you that before 1860 the relations between landlord and tenant were founded not upon contract but upon tenure, or in other words upon custom. The Irish tenant was neither a "farmer" in the legal sense, nor a "leaseholder," but enjoyed a real right capable of being sub-let or sold, a circumstance involving a series of legal consequences into the details of which we cannot here enter.[12] These vestiges of ancient feudal right, however, were of a nature to shock the theorists of *laissez-faire* and free competition. To solve the agrarian question in Ireland, they argued, there was but one thing both necessary and sufficient, namely, commercial liberty. Ireland must have freedom of exchange in all matters connected with land. Therefore, it was on a foundation of free contract, express

[11] On this point see our remarks on the rights of the tenant to improvements and to the increase in value of the soil.

[12] The landlord did not guarantee "effective possession" and enjoyed no privilege over the goods of the tenants as security for payment of the rent. The tenant, on the other hand, was not bound to cultivate "en bon père de famille" nor at the end of his tenure to restore the land in good condition. V. Richey *Irish Land Laws*, 35, etc. *Cf.* Fournier, *La Question Agraire en Irlande*, p. 62 and the following.

or implied,—a contract analogous to that of hiring,—that the Act of 1860 based the future legal relations between tenant and landlord.[13] Of genuine rights there was no longer to be any question. The farmer could be expelled for non-payment of rent by a mere action for ejectment. Eviction being thus facilitated, a new clause, concerning the farmer's improvements on the land, permitted the landlord to prevent or confiscate these improvements at will. The pretended reform, therefore, merely aggravated matters, by taking from the peasant those few forms of protection, the last safeguards that he had hitherto found in traditional custom or legal formality. Fortunately, Deasy's Act, when once placed on the Statute Book, was but little used in practice.[14] Nevertheless, it marks a stage in the history of the Irish agrarian question. Before 1860, the law had intervened only to strengthen the rights of landlords and to protect them against their tenants. In 1860, it seeks to come to a position of equilibrium between the parties, or, in other words, of non-intervention. Soon the makers of the law will come to understand that they must interfere on the other side, on behalf of the farmers; and that after having for almost two centuries favoured the legal exploitation of a whole people of peasants by those whom conquest had made masters of the soil, they must now protect the weak against the strong, the tenants against the landlords. This, therefore, became the aim of the legislation soon afterwards inaugurated by Gladstone and the Liberal Government in England. But, before examining the broad lines of Gladstonian reform, it will be well to take a summary glance at the conditions surrounding the Irish agrarian problem, and to bring into relief certain points of a general character which exercise a predominating influence over the question.

13 Consequently, the lessor is impliedly held to guarantee to his lessee peaceful possession; the farmer is held to have undertaken by contract to pay rent, and to restore what is let to him in good condition. *Cf.* Richey, p. 52 and following pages, and Fournier, p. 87, etc.

14 *Report of the Bessborough Commission*, p. 6.

II.—General Data of the Problem.

First of all, then, we must realise the importance of the agrarian question, and its pre-eminence above all other economic questions in Ireland. This may be measured by the fact that, out of the whole Irish people, numbering rather less than 4½ millions, the rural classes—which in England amount to only 19 per cent. of the whole—actually account in Ireland for more than two-thirds of the population, or over three million inhabitants.[1] Agriculture in Ireland employs directly, according to the Census of 1901, 2,664,204 people.[2] The landlords are some 12,000 to 15,000 in number. The cultivators, that is to say, tenants, or former tenants who have acquired the ownership of their land under recent land-purchase Acts, show a total of 544,625 (heads of families), in 1903,[3] and there are in addition the agricultural labourers. Many of these, being at the same time tenants and labourers, have already been included in the figures quoted, but a certain proportion, which cannot be accurately determined, must come under a separate category as neither possessing nor cultivating land for their own profit.

We have, thus, a whole population which depends for its daily life directly on the land, on the annual profit obtained off the 15,536,751 acres of cultivable soil which are available in Ireland.[4] This annual profit is estimated by statisticians at a mean figure of 40 millions sterling, including the wages and profits of farmers and agricultural labourers, and the rent of the landlords. This latter item is nowadays not valued at above 8 millions, although

[1] 3,073,846 according to the Census of 1901 (General Report, p. 10). In Germany, agriculture occupies 41.67 per cent. of the population (G. Blondel, *Les populations Rurales de l'Allemagne*, Paris, 1897, p. 5). In France, 50 per cent. (De Foville, *La France economique*, p. 51).

[2] *General Report*, p. 16. This figure is certainly less than the true number.

[3] *Agricultural Statistics of Ireland*, 1903, p. xix.

[4] *Agricultural Statistics of Ireland*, 1903, pp. v. and 3.

25 years ago it was reckoned at 10 millions, and Wakefield in 1817 put the amount at over 17 millions.[5] We may remark that this Irish land is not naturally poor; competent observers such as Arthur Young, Wakefield, Sir R. Kane, L. de Lavergne, have always refused to regard it as poor. It is capable of feeding 18 million inhabitants, according to Sir Robert Kane, or 25 million, according to De Beaumont. If to-day Ireland can scarcely support even her present restricted population, this is not the fault of nature, but is due to antiquated methods of farming, indolence and carelessness on the part of the cultivators, and the want of capital. It is also, and chiefly, the result of special economic conditions which deserve the closest study.

In the first place, land furnishes almost the only resource and sole revenue of Ireland. Apart from it, Ireland produces hardly anything. "Debarred from every other trade and industry," wrote the late Lord Dufferin, "the entire nation (during the eighteenth century) flung itself back upon the land with as fatal an impulse as when a river whose current is suddenly impeded rolls back and drowns the valley it once fertilized." If, as is true, two-thirds of the population are directly dependent on land, one may add that indirectly the whole population is dependent on it. There is no wealth, the Physiocrats used to say, except land. A mistake, of course, but a mistake that was, and still is, true for Ireland.

5 The figure of 40 million pounds sterling, representing the gross product of the land, less all expenses of cultivation other than wages, profits and rents, is that given in 1895 before the *Financial Relations Commission* by the eminent statistician, Sir Robert Giffen. (Evidence II. 13-14, 165-166, 176-177). This figure would be rather above than below the mark, according to Sir Robert Giffen. Dr. T. W. Grimshaw, then Registrar-General of Ireland, in his evidence before the same Commission, gave a higher figure: 46 million pounds (*Evidence* I. 121-122, 451 and following pages, 456). Both results are based on statistics collected by the police, statistics which Irish opinion regards as given under pressure (*Evidence* I., 282 and 283, Evidence of Mr. Murrough O'Brien, Land Commissioner, and *Final Report*, p. 78 and 79, special report of Mr. Sexton). In Ireland the tendency is to believe that the mean annual figure of agricultural production does not in reality exceed 35 or 36 million pounds sterling.

It is here that we discover the special and really unique characteristic of the agrarian question in Ireland. In every other country, in England or in France, a peasant who cannot pick up a living in the fields, goes off to the town, to a factory. In Ireland one may say that there are no factories, and, with the exception of Dublin and Belfast, there are no industrial towns. The Irish peasant has no choice nor alternative; land represents for him the only work to which he can turn his hand, the only means of earning a livelihood. He who has land has life; he who loses land dies. The competition for the land is consequently intense. Each man tries to outbid his neighbour, and, if possible, to oust him; prices rise in consequence of this competition; and so the peasants make themselves the artificers of their common misfortune.

The struggle for land is thus the Irish form of the struggle for life: *Qui terre a, guerre a*! Nowhere is the popular saying more true. The land is the source of jealousies, disputes and troubles without end. Hence these "boycottings" which, under one name or another, have always existed in Ireland, which hit you through your connections, your clients, your tradesmen, in the village or at the market. Hence the hatred of the peasant against the grazier, that is to say, the cattle merchant, who year after year rents from the landlord fattening land for his beasts, and thus withdraws it from cultivation. Hence the war against the grabber or stealer of land, the intruder who, without possessing any rights in the matter, comes on speculation and takes a farm from which the preceding tenant has been expelled "unjustly," that is to say, for the non-payment of an excessive rent—such "grabbing" involving a violation of the custom which from all time has recognised the tenant's right of joint property in the soil that he cultivates.[6] All this results

6 In virtue of this custom an unjustly evicted tenant practically preserves his rights. If he can, he will try to retake possession by force; if not, he will wait, and, in some cases after ten or twenty years, he will succeed in getting himself reinstated. One such farm, the tenant of which was unjustly evicted twenty-five years ago, has

out of the struggle for the land. It is the effect of that unnatural competition which, being repressed at one point, reappears at another, baffles all foresight, perverts all reforms, and will always make the solution of the agrarian question not merely very difficult, but, in fact, impossible, so long as no industries exist in Ireland, and there is no resource but the land.

If we pause for a moment to compare the situation of the Irish peasant with that of the ancient serfs in feudal times we find the one the precise opposite of the other. The serf was tied to the land, but he had a right over the soil; he could not leave the land, but no one could turn him off it. On an entirely contrary system, the Irish peasant, before 1870, was essentially "removable." He only asked to be left on the land; he would have asked for nothing better than to be a serf. The terrible thing for him was to be evictable at will. What in reality made this fate so terrible was precisely this uncurbed competition for the occupation of the soil, which brought it about that a landlord who evicted a tenant could at once find two others in his stead ready to take up the holding at any price. The landlord was master of the situation. "He has," says Lord Normanby, "the monopoly of the means of subsistence, together with a power that exists nowhere else, the power of starvation." Naturally he made use of it to refuse leases to his tenants, to levy rack rents, and to evict his tenants at will. All this, it used to be said, is the free play of economic forces, the law of supply and demand. This is not so; it is the result of unfair competition and of a perverted market. Doubtless if the supply of land were unlimited, or even more or less equal to the demand, then prices would adjust themselves in a free and equitable manner. But here, whether intentionally or not, the landlord is speculating

remained waste to this day; no one dares to take it up. This is the *Black Farm* near Maryborough. We may add that *grabbers* and *graziers*, those two props of landlordism, are usually somewhat uninteresting persons; rural usurers, traders on trust, "greedy cormorants," as Sir Thomas More, even in his day, used to call them.

on the necessity of the peasant, his necessity of possessing land. It is an unequal struggle between a monopoly on the one hand and a primary need on the other. Besides this there could not possibly be any freedom of contract between landlord and tenant. "The very word 'contract,'" said Lord Dufferin, "implies mutual independence of both parties; who would dare to uphold that the Irish tenants are in an independent position? Between the landlord and them a treaty or a contract is out of the question." Nassau Senior is equally strong in his assertions. "The bargain between landlords and tenants in Ireland is not a calm affair in which the tenant offers what should be a fair price, and cares little whether his offer is rejected; it is a battle such as, in a besieged town, might take place over buying bread."[7]

This competition for the land naturally increases in keenness accordingly as there are more peasants for the land or less land for the peasants. Now it is clear that the greater the area withdrawn from cultivation and given over to grazing, so much the less will remain for human occupation. On the other hand, the more peasants there are in proportion to the land, so much the more danger will there be of its becoming subdivided into minute holdings. These two special and closely connected points —sub-division and the predominance of pasture over tillage—tend singularly to increase the difficulties of the agrarian question in Ireland. Let us examine them in turn, beginning with the latter.

Ireland has, from the earliest ages, been "The Green Isle," the home above all others of cattle breeding. In the sixteenth century Sir W. Petty reckoned 11 million acres of pasturage as against only 800,000 of cultivated land. According to the trend of the times, under the influence of causes that were often as much social as economic, the proportion of land under pasture as compared with that under tillage has alternately increased

7 Irish tenants are not the creatures of contract, but of servitude. (George C. Brodrick, *Political Studies*, London, 1879, p. 319).

and diminished. During the first half of the eighteenth century, pasture had encroached considerably on cultivated land, owing, indirectly, to the effect of the Penal Laws.[8] Wesley declared in 1760 that Connaught contained then only half the population that it had possessed some eighty years earlier. From 1782 to 1829 a contrary movement had taken place; the ploughs cut their furrows through lands which, from an agricultural point of view, ought never to have been tilled at all.[9] Then, from 1835 or 1840 down to our own times, we have, as in the eighteenth century, a general substitution of pasturage for corn land. This change has taken place under the influence of Free Trade and the competition of foreign grain, as also under the pressure of the agrarian agitation and the selfishness of the landlords. During the last sixty years the cultivated land has considerably increased in England and Scotland; in Ireland it has decreased by half, and the art of tillage is now almost lost in certain districts.[10] Of land fit for cultivation in England 53.5 per cent. is pasture, in Wales 68 per cent., in Scotland 28 per cent., in Ireland 81 per cent. In France, on the contrary, 55 per cent. of the cultivable land is under the plough, in Belgium seven-eighths, and in Denmark one-half; while Wurtemburg and Saxony have two-thirds and four-fifths respectively of their total area in cultivation. But as for Ireland, official statistics show only 3,038,072 acres, or about 19 per cent. of her 15,536,751 acres, under cultivation.[11] Even these figures do not tell

8 Lecky *op. cit.*, II., 245 and 246. A law of 1735 exempted the pasture lands from ecclesiastical tithes (*Ib.*).

9 *Agric. Stat.* 1902, p. xiii.

10 This is the opinion of an official in the *Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction* (*Journal*, December, 1903, p. 198)—*Agric. Stat.* 1903, p. 2, table B; the area cropped (other than clover and meadow land) in 1860 amounted to 21 per cent. of the whole superficies of the country; in 1903 it amounted only to 11 per cent.

11 *Agric. Stat.*, pp. 2 to 4. This statistical return gives 4,634,978 acres under crops, but from these figures we must deduct (as the editor of the return observes) 1,596,906 acres classed under the heading:—hay mown on permanent pasture. There are in Ireland 304,052 acres of woods and plantations. The statistics relating to the United Kingdom are drawn from the *Agric. Stat.* 1900, p. ix. Those concerning

the whole story. They do not tell us that pasture has taken the best of the land, leaving the worst to agriculture. In Ireland, the richer the land the smaller is the population to be found on it. The poorer tracts are cultivated and peopled, the richer are kept for grazing, and deserted. Nor do our statistics tell us that when the best lands, such as those of Meath or Limerick, had been converted into pasture, the graziers turned to those of inferior quality which were, by nature, unfit for cattle breeding, and would, according to experts, have given twice as good results under the plough.[12] Finally we may add, on the authority of the same experts,[13] cattle-breeding "has not progressed in proportion to the amount of landed wealth absorbed by pasture."[14] Doubtless, there has been a great increase in the number of live stock during the last sixty years. In 1841 there were 1,863,000 head of cattle; in 1903 the number amounted to 4,664,112. In 1841 Ireland possessed 2,106,000 head of sheep; in 1903 she had 3,944,604.[15] But the number of milch cows has remained stationary at about a million and a half; in fact it has a tendency to diminish. The exportation of cattle has not sensibly augmented during the last thirty years.[16] The productivity of the pasturage, as estimated in terms of head of cattle to the acre, has not appreciably increased during the same period. Though her area under grazing is more than eleven times that of Belgium, Ireland possesses hardly more than three times the amount of cattle in that country.[17] Ireland has not only done too much cattle breeding during the last sixty years, but she has done it badly. The industry is one that needs delicate

the continental nations have been given by Mr. Th. Kennedy in the *Journal* of the *Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 52nd session, p. 399-400.

[12] *Journal of the Department of Agriculture*, December 1903, p. 197-198. *Agric. Stat.* 1902, pp. vii., xii., xiii.

[13] *Agric. Stat.* 1900, p. ix.; 1902, p. ix.

[14] *Agric. Stat.* 1900, p. ix.; 1903, p. 19.

[15] *Agric. Stat.* 1902, p. x. and xiv.

[16] *Agric. Stat.* 1902, p. xii.

[17] *Agric. Stat.* 1900, p. ix.

handling; it has been ill-directed and specialised to such a degree that the rural economy of Ireland has been reduced to a most precarious condition.[18]

A partial return to agriculture, which is the course of action now preached by all specialists,[19] has thus become a necessary and preliminary condition of any solution of the Irish agrarian question. To recapitulate: Ireland at the beginning of the nineteenth century had made excessive use of tillage; during the second half of the century she has swung to the other extreme and made excessive use of grazing. Since 1860, nearly two million acres out of a little over four millions have gone out of cultivation;[20] and this excessive reaction, by augmenting the competition for the land, has largely

[18] For this reason. Cattle breeding, as is well known, admits of two distinct branches:—the "raising" of the beast, and then its "fattening." Landlords and graziers do some fattening on the good lands of Meath and Limerick. But the branch to which Ireland principally devotes herself is the raising or rearing of stock, with the view of eventually selling to English or Scotch breeders, who will then undertake the fattening. Thus it comes that out of 1,300,000 beasts representing the increase in Irish cattle since 1861, almost half is represented by animals less than a year old. Two-thirds of the animals exported from Ireland are young beasts, not fattened. (*Agric. Stat.* 1902, p. x and following pages. *Cf. Ireland Industrial and Agricultural*, Dublin, 1902, p. 322 and following). This specialisation involves serious dangers for Ireland. In the first place, it is well known that while "fattening" is profitable for the soil, the "raising" of cattle exhausts it by taking from it the fertilising elements without making any return. Of the two operations Ireland has undertaken the more onerous; the more profitable goes to benefit Great Britain. Besides this if a contagious disease should break out among the cattle in Ireland, the English ports will be closed to Irish exporters. Finally, one may foresee that England, which at present forbids the importation of foreign cattle "on foot" (foreign cattle must be slaughtered at the ports of entry), will some day see herself obliged to open her doors to the great oversea producers, Argentina and Canada. The privilege now enjoyed by Ireland will then disappear, and this will mean the ruin of Irish cattle breeding.

[19] *Journal of the Department of Agriculture*, December, 1903, p. 202. Some authorities also recommend the fattening of cattle under care (house feeding), as a means of placing the cattle-breeding industry on a sounder basis, and for this purpose they advise the cultivation of crops fit for fodder under a carefully arranged system of mixed farming, such as is practised in Scotland, in Belgium, etc.

[20] *Agric. Stat.*, 1903, p. 2. The area of land under crops in 1860 (other than meadow land and clover) was 4,375,621 acres; in 1903, 2,410,813 acres.

contributed to the second great plague of Irish agriculture, namely, the sub-division of holdings.

This custom of dividing up the farms was not in reality an outcome of the Clearances, which, historically speaking, it preceded. It is the direct product of that great economic fact, the absence of industries, which results in a universal scramble for the land; for land which is again and again parcelled out until it is reduced to mere "dust." In 1845, before the Great Famine, the system of sub-division was worse than at any other time. Emigration tended to reduce it, by reducing at one and the same time the numbers of the population and the demand for the land; but the Clearances then re-established and perpetuated it, by restricting the supply of land, owing to their development of grazing. Emigration, however, has proved an even stronger force than the Clearances, so that in spite of all other influences, the sub-division of holdings has decreased throughout Ireland during the last sixty years. In 1841 there were 691,202 holdings of over an acre, the total population of the country being 8,175,124. In 1901, with a population reduced to 4,458,775, there were but 515,847 holdings of this size. In 1841 just 80.5 per cent. of these holdings consisted of plots of under 15 acres, in 1901 the proportion had sunk to 42.1 per cent.[21] From these figures we can realise the improvement that has taken place as regards the dividing up of the land, but we see also the price which Ireland has had to pay for this improvement,—the loss, namely, of almost half her population.

In spite of this progress, more apparent, perhaps, than real, there still remains in Ireland a disastrous plethora of small holdings. It is easy to be misled by the statistics on this point. Doubtless, they prove that Ireland is a country of little farms and petty culture; but it must be remembered that side by side with these, there are to be found great wastes of grazing land, immense *latifundia*,

[21] *Agric. Stat.*, 1903, p. 17.

deserted and bare.[22] They certainly show that out of 544,625 cultivators there are 388,802, or about 71 per cent., who are working on holdings of less than 30 acres, and who, all told, do not occupy more than 4,792,561 acres, or 23.5 per cent. of the surface of the land in Ireland.[23] But is this a degree of sub-division which, on the face of it, can be called excessive ? Have we not in France 4,852,963 agricultural farms (say 85 per cent. of their number) of less than 25 acres, occupying all told only 25.5 per cent. of the surface of the country ? [24] What is it then that aggravates matters in Ireland and renders the situation so critical ? The cause lies first in the fact that, as a general rule, "the majority of the land in the possession of these small farmers is second rate, or inferior, land, and not, as is generally the case in such countries as Belgium, the best soil."[25] The

[22] *Agl. Stat.*, 1903, p. xx.

Holdings of	Number of		Area in Acres (estimated)	Percentage of total number of		Percentage of total area (estimated)
	Occupiers	Holdings		Occ'pr's	Hold'gs	
Less than 1 acre	73,926	74,890	37,445	13·6	12·7	0·2
1 to 5 acres	55,771	62,292	186,876	10·2	10·5	0·9
5 to 15 ,,	137,832	154,631	1,546,310	25·3	26·2	7·6
15 to 30 ,,	121,273	134,308	3,021,930	22·3	22·7	14·8
30 to 50 ,,	67,897	74,366	2,974,640	12·5	12·6	14·6
50 to 100 ,,	54,108	57,446	4,308,450	9·9	9·7	21·2
100 to 200 ,,	22,763	23,058	3,458,700	4·2	3·9	17·0
200 to 500 ,,	8,856	8,141	2,849,350	1·6	1·4	14·0
More than 500 ,,	2,199	1,516	1,967,024	0·4	0·3	9·7
	544,625	590,648	20,350,725	100·0	100·0	100·0

[23] To be accurate one ought to deduct from this total the 73,926 occupiers of less than an acre, whose holdings are not properly agricultural ; they are gardens, town-plots, country labourers' cottages, etc. (*Cf. Agric. Stat.*, 1903, p. xvii).

[24] *Agricultural Statistics of* 1897. In Belgium out of 829,625 farms, 734,874 are under 5 hectares (12½ acres). In Wurtemburg, 280,268 out of 306,643 are under 10 hectares (25 acres) ; in Saxony, 164,537 out of 193,708 (*Agric. Stat.*, 1902, p. xxviii.). *Cf.* De Foville, *le Morcellement*, Paris, 1885, p. 233.

[25] *Agric. Stat.*, 1903, p. xviii.

Clearances, as we have said, took the best of the land in order to turn it into grazing, and left the rest to the peasantry. Moreover, these small holdings are usually composed of a large number of minute parcels of land, inextricably entangled in those of the next-door neighbour, so as to render cultivation as inconvenient as possible. There is no country in which redistribution would seem more necessary. Let us take an estate in King's County as an illustration.[26] On this estate there is a holding of 16 acres parcelled out into 13 sub-divisions; another of 10 acres parcelled out into 15 sub-divisions; a third of 12 acres with 16 sub-divisions, and so forth; all these sub-divisions being inter-tangled with one another. We take another example in the County of Clare: we find there 77 holdings, of which 6 only are rated at above £10, all consisting of patches of ground, detached from one another, and often a mile or two apart. Many holdings include 20 or 30 sub-divisions of which many are held in common by several tenants.[27] We may quote here some further statistics from the Census of 1901. Out of 490,301 holdings enumerated in the Census, 134,182, that is, 27 per cent., are rated at less than £4; 275,344, or 56 per cent., are rated at less than £10; 335,491, or 68.5 per cent. (more than two-thirds) are rated at under £15 a year.[28] We here lay our finger on that plague to which the Irish have given a name that is at the same time a picture, agrarian "congestion." This is the streaming together of the peasant population into certain districts, where it is overcrowded on holdings too small and land too poor to feed it, while the remainder of the country-side stretches out on all sides, a waste of grass with no sign of human life on it, depopulated, and, so to speak, squeezed dry of blood.

[26] Mr. Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, in Parliament, *Hansard*, 25th March, 1902. We may add that there are no "commons" in Ireland, a fact that makes life harder for the peasant.

[27] Extract from a Judgment of the Estates Commissioners of January 19th, 1905. Dooras and Kinvara estate.

[28] *Census*, 1901, p. 16-17.

What is, in reality, the minimum limit, below which sub-division becomes excessive? Take as the unit of cultivation, to employ a common method, the area of land that a family of peasants can cultivate by their own unaided efforts without outside help, and which, in return, produces enough to feed them without their being compelled to seek work elsewhere. All agricultural undertakings on a smaller scale than this limit would be contrary to the laws of sound rural economy; they would be uneconomic. The minimum extent of this unit of cultivation naturally varies according to the situation and the quality of the soil, or according to the economic condition of the country. In view of the general poverty of the country the Irish are inclined to fix this limit very high.[29] Taking into account present conditions, and picturing to ourselves, on the other hand, an Ireland in which the agrarian question has been settled; an Ireland in which cultivation could develop on modern lines, with technical education and co-operation, such as, indeed, we are already beginning to see,[30] we might, I think, fix 15 acres as the minimum for an "economic" farm.[31] On this basis we find in Ireland 291,813 holdings below the minimum, out of a total of 590,648. Deduct from this number the 74,890 holdings of less than an acre, which represent gardens, labourers' cottages, and the like, which are not in reality agricultural farms, and there remain 216,923 holdings below the limit. These "dwarf" holdings, which are uneconomic, impracticable, and insufficient to support a family, form about two-fifths of the total number of agricultural holdings in Ireland.[32] Many of

29 An expert of the Department of Agriculture estimated a short time ago that in order to be "economic" a farm in Ireland ought not to consist of less than 30 acres (25 when within reach of towns); this would give us 350,000 small holdings below the minimum, without including holdings of less than an acre (*Journal of the Department of Agriculture*, December, 1903, p. 199).

30 See Part III.

31 This is the figure given by M. de Lavergne (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, December 1st, 1867, p. 750).

32 There is another method of calculation which gives the results at a rather higher figure; according to the *Census* of 1901, p. 17, there

them are massed together in the West,[33] in the province of Connaught, and the counties of Kerry and Donegal. The others are spread throughout the whole country; one finds them in the very middle of the rich lands of Leinster, in Protestant Ulster and in Catholic Munster alike. Their owners are not "professional" farmers, but peasants who were born on the soil and have no other means of livelihood but a tiny and inadequate scrap of land. These are the cottiers, or crofters as they are called in the Highlands of Scotland (where a few of them are to be found), who live from hand to mouth, possess none of the capacities for methodical cultivation, but search here and there for a living, and supply their wants by hiring out their labour. To them farming is a secondary consideration. Reduce their rent by 50 per cent., even abolish it altogether, and you would have made but little improvement in their condition. The main point in the case of these 200,000 peasants is that their holdings are too small to afford a living. The special problem of Ireland is to increase these holdings so as to make them economic. The Irish agrarian question will not be solved until a remedy has been found for the excessive subdivision of the land, and a method formulated of increasing these "dwarf" holdings.

III.—General Data of the Problem (*Continued*).

Let us now consider the other side of the problem, the other factor of the equation; the thirteen or fourteen thousand landlords. These numbers represent the small

are 275,344 holdings rated at less than £10, this figure of £10 being taken as the minimum rate of a holding sufficient to feed a family. Deduct from this number 29,037 holdings of less than an acre (p. 16 of the *Census*), and there remain 246,307 uneconomic holdings. The eminent economist, Father Finlay, by another method of calculation which was more scientific but more complicated, estimated the number of uneconomic holdings at 225,000 after deducting the holdings of less than one acre (*New Ireland Review*, July, 1903, p. 313).

33 *Infra.*, Chap. III. *The Problem of the West.*

class of great proprietors, who, out of their vast estates, let one portion, the cultivated portion, to peasants or tenants; but reserve for themselves personally their mansion or castle, their demesne or private estate, and the pasture lands which they hire out every year to the cattle-breeders or graziers. Out of these thirteen or fourteen thousand landlords[1] there are 17 individuals who each own more than 50,000 acres, 90 who own from 20,000 to 50,000 acres, and 637 who own from 5,000 to 20,000 acres. Between them these 744 landlords possess 10,112,000 acres, or more than half the surface of the soil. Many of the landlords have on their estates several hundreds of tenants; plenty of them have several thousands. Ireland is a land of small farms; but she is also, like England,[2] a land of very large properties.

These properties are the offspring of confiscation. This is true beyond doubt, but the same remark applies to all landed property. In every portion of the world it dates its origin from conquest: everywhere, too, it has been legitimised by prescription, by transfer, and by mutual trust. We may fairly ask, then, what special difference is there between the case of Ireland and that of other countries? The difference lies in this fact, that the new masters of the soil have never allowed themselves to become assimilated, or "nationalised" by the conquered people from whom they were separated by their race, by their faith, and by the fact that in Ireland

1 The above are only the landlords properly so-called, that is to say, proprietors of estates leased (or which had been leased before the land-purchase laws) to tenants. We omit all other land owners, such as landed proprietors in the ordinary sense of the word, but without tenants, proprietors who work their own land, former tenants now become proprietors of their holdings, etc. The above figures are from the *Doomsday Register*, which was drawn up in 1872-1875, and comprised, in all, 68,711 landowners of whom 36,144 were owners of less than an acre, and of whom 14,150 were owners of over 100 acres, and between them had in their hands 97.5 per cent. of the total superficial area of Ireland; the last-named are the true landlords, whose numbers have fallen during the last 30 years as a consequence of Land Purchase Acts. Three Irish landlords are owners of more than 100,000 acres. *Cf. Thom's Official Directory*, 1903, pp. 773, 793, and 794.

2 Still more so than England. See the figures pertaining to England in A. de Foville, *Le Morcellement*, p. 35, and in Shaw Lefevre, *Agrarian Tenures*, p. 14, etc.

they have always constituted the "English Garrison." Anglo-Saxon in heart and interest, they accepted the profits but not the duties that came to them with their Irish concessions. As absentees, they have had no aim in Ireland beyond drawing their rents. Or else they have speculated and traded in their title deeds, and passed them on to middlemen, who in their turn handed them over to others. This fact explains why at the present time we find established on one and the same estate, behind the landlord *de facto*, who is merely a usufructuary, a whole ladder of legally instituted landlords, superimposed one above the other, and each paying a rent to his antecedent in title, until at length we succeed in discovering at the summit of this pyramid the original grantee of the Crown, or indeed the Crown itself.[3] One and all they have regarded Irish land purely as a speculation, not as a home; they have remained conquerors in a conquered country. Hence it has resulted that being conscious of their position as strangers and intruders, they have, as a rule, considered themselves entirely quit of any natural debt toward the country, and equally free from all the duties of ownership.

For instance, the Irish landlord, as a general rule, has never advanced a penny of capital, nor put a farthing into the land. He has let to the peasant not a farm ready to be cultivated but mere soil, raw earth. The peasant has had to do everything else; he has made the roads, built the cottage or hovel, cleared and drained the land, and built the fences. This has been a subject of constant comment in Ireland from Burke, in the eighteenth century,[4] to the celebrated Devon Commission in 1845. The exceptions merely prove the rule. "One could count on one's fingers," said Lord Cowper in 1887, "the number of Irish estates on which the improvements have been made by the landlord." [5]

3 The Crown possesses Quit Rents or Crown Rents.

4 Quoted by Matthew Arnold, *Irish Essays*, p. 28.

5 *House of Lords*, 2nd May, 1887.

Why is this so? Firstly, because of the complications arising out of the smallness and the great number of holdings on the same estate. But more especially because the landlord, having come to Ireland in order to make money, and finding himself "dumped" down on a confiscated estate the ownership of which was anything but assured to him, never cared to risk any capital in it. To draw an income from it, well and good; but to invest one's own funds in it, certainly not! Besides this, it was all the more to his interest to get the tenants to do everything, seeing that it was precisely by this means that he retained his hold over them. The capital which they had invested in the soil, their expenditure on it, the houses they built, the enclosures, the drainage, all became his property according to the law, and accrued in fact to him as the owner of the land. Not only did he thus benefit by the fruit of their labour, but he actually kept them at his mercy through the results of this labour. Feeling thoroughly assured that the tenant would do his utmost to remain on the land, he raised his rents, raised them in fact all the more according to the scale and value of the improvements. In this manner he stood to gain, in either way, without trouble and without risk.

He is not, one sees, an ordinary landlord, or a *bona fide* landlord such as one finds in England, where men of this class have spent on investments in landed property a sum estimated at £700,000,000.[6] He has never returned to the soil anything of what the soil gave him. He is only a bare proprietor in the literal sense of the word, a dead weight on the land. One can easily conceive that under these conditions the ancient Celtic idea, the idea of co-ownership of the land by members of the clan, so far from disappearing out of the mind of the peasant, has on the contrary, tended to become rooted there. Is it not he, the tenant, who has erected of his own initiative everything that stands above the bare soil? Is it not he

6 *New Ireland Review*, September, 1897, p. 45 Article by Mr. E. Greer, Legal Land Commissioner.

who has given to that soil a value which but for him it would not possess? Is he not, therefore, something more than a mere lessee; has he not real rights in the land analogous to those of an associate or co-proprietor? Moreover, this tenant-right, the foundation of which lies in the value that the tenant added to the land, is by no means a myth. Throughout Ulster, custom has given it the force of law, and even outside Ulster tenant-right has a market value and can be bought and sold. From this train of thought it is but a short step to the idea that the landlord has himself forfeited his rights, that prescription has operated, not in his favour, but against him. The more we improve the land, say the tenants, the more does he raise our rents. For generations we have paid rents to the landlord on a value which we ourselves created. We have therefore paid him off what is due to him, and it is we who are now the true proprietors of the soil. I do not say that this idea is general; but it exists in many places. What a splendid illustration it would have furnished to the author of that celebrated saying "Property is Theft"!

We may go farther and may say that, generally speaking, the Irish landlords have not fulfilled any of those duties, whether material or moral, which have always been so well attended to by landowners in England. Whether Catholic or Protestant, with a few honourable exceptions, they have done nothing for the interests of the peasant or the country. Even now-a-days, in one out of every three cases they are absentees; many of them have never been seen by their tenants, and some of them have never even seen Ireland. Through their agents, that is to say, through irresponsible managers who regulate, from an office, the affairs of a whole county, with all the severity, and all the financial exactitude of officials; through the little world of subordinates—bailiffs, writ servers, bog rangers, and rent warners—who live upon landlordism and exploit it, they keep the whole country under a yoke of tyranny and corruption.

Doubtless there have been, and there are, among the Irish landlords, kind-hearted men who have tried to do good to those around them. Doubtless also among the very worst landlords we must reckon Corporations and Public Institutions such as Trinity College, or *novi homines*, business men and speculators planted upon the soil of Ireland by the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849; and here as elsewhere, the system is more to blame than the individual. Landlordism has been more odious than the landlords themselves. We have here a set of men whom conquest planted in the country as a dominant race, men to whom the law granted absolute power, and circumstances gave a monopoly of the land: can we be astonished if they exploit the situation? Some abuse of their rights was inevitable; but we must add that it has been odious. The Irish landlords have traded on the peasants' "land hunger," and on the peasants themselves, to the utmost point of exaction. At the time of the Great Clearances, when they wanted to rid themselves at one blow of their poverty-stricken tenants and their Poor Rates, they showed an appalling want of humanity. The times are now past when, after the operation of the Crowbar Brigade, they used to drench the hovels with paraffin so as to make them burn, and when the vengeance of the landlord pursued the evicted in their flight, forbidding other tenants to take them in, under penalty of being themselves evicted. But even to-day landlords see nothing wrong in embarking on campaigns of gratuitous evictions, turning out the sick and their children even when it is clear that the rent is too high. Whether it be for evicting tenants, seizing their goods, or selling them, they have always laid claim to have all the forces of the State at their disposal. When an Under-Secretary of State, Thomas Drummond, ventured to remind them in a sentence which is now celebrated that "Property has its duties as well as its rights," they merely shrugged their shoulders; but they were shocked when a brave soldier like General Sir Redvers Buller in

1886, or a statesman in sympathy with Ireland like Mr. John Morley, refused to help them with armed forces in carrying out some particularly repugnant ejectments and evictions.

The price of tyranny is corruption, and the Irish landlords have been obliged to pay it. Until the Great Famine they had for the most part lived recklessly; that great national misfortune ruined one out of every three, and left the other two stranded. There are few estates which are not mortgaged to English companies, some of them up to as much as twice their market value. It is commonly calculated that Irish land is, as a whole, charged to at least half of its value. Then there are other charges that fall on the landlord: those resulting from settlements and entails. The land of Ireland, like that of England, is almost entirely bound by settlement, a fact which turns the landlord into a mere tenant for life. This method has succeeded in England because in England the aristocracy is rich and independent; but it has not had the same success in Ireland, where the landlord has usually no personal property from which he can provide suitable maintenance for the younger children of the family. Family charges, mortgages, the rents due to the head landlord, ecclesiastical tithes, these give one some idea of the burden which weighs upon the shoulders of the Irish landlord, and through him upon those of the tenant. How could Irish property fail to succumb under such a burden?

These then are the special, we might say the exceptional, or even unique, features of the agrarian problem in Ireland. "I can imagine no fault," said the Prime Minister of England, speaking a short time ago at Westminster, "attaching to any land system, which does not attach to the Irish system."[7] Ireland suffers all the drawbacks of the system of very large properties, together with all those appertaining to very small holdings, without reaping any of the advantages of either the one or the other. She suffers from an excess of *latifundia* and also

7 House of Commons, 4th May, 1903.

from an excessive sub-division of land. On the landlords' side she suffers from the laws of primogeniture and entail, and on the peasants' side from constant division and sub-division of holdings. She stands in need of capital and her landlords have nothing but debts. She has an agrarian proletariat, but has none of the things that go to make life easy for it; and is without any of these institutions which in country districts form a safety-valve for the rights of property, such as "commons," rights of grazing or of pasture and the like. Every problem, even down to that of the agricultural labourers, exists in Ireland. The whole country seethes with the fierce competition among the farmers beating against the landlord monopoly. What steps has England taken to find a remedy for this situation ?[8]

IV.—The Act of 1870.

It was in 1870 that, under the impulse of Mr. Gladstone, England made her first attempt at a remedy. After passing so many Acts in favour of the landlords—there had been no less than 32 between 1816 and 1843—

[8] A study of the Agrarian Question in Ireland would suggest comparisons with foreign countries. Want of space forbids our entering upon them; but we may say that, with the exception of Scotland, it is in Sicily and Calabria that one would find the closest points of comparison.

Besides this one might draw a parallel with the evolution of the agrarian question in England. As is well known, England by a curious divergence in her history, although at the beginning of the 17th century she stood in advance of any other European state as regards her numerous and energetic class of peasant proprietors or yeomen, has during the last few centuries worked out an agrarian regime very closely resembling that which legally held sway in Ireland before Mr. Gladstone's reforms 35 years ago. How is it that this system of free contract and free competition has succeeded in maintaining its hold on England, whereas in Ireland it so soon became impossible ? Simply because the circumstances in the two countries were entirely different. In England the farms are big, the farmers are well-to-do men, capitalists; there is little competition, the surplus of workers finding employment in industry; the landlords are resident, and they have always invested a good deal of money in the land. Finally, we may add, proprietors and cultivators are of the same race and the same faith, and in fact are one people. In Ireland the case is, as we have endeavoured to show, exactly contrary.

she had then, by means of Deasy's Act in 1860, endeavoured to hold the balance true between landlord and tenant. She now found it necessary to go still further, and to arm the tenants against the landlords. Many indeed were the suggested plans of reform, all of which acknowledged that the tenant had a right in the land, but which only granted him a more or less incomplete protection against the three scourges from which he suffered: insecurity of tenure, confiscation of improvements, and rack rents. On the other hand, foreigners such as G. de Beaumont, or the German, Raumer, and Englishmen such as John Bright, were preaching the buying out of the landlords in order to create a class of peasant proprietors. With the latter party Gladstone admitted his theoretical agreement by inserting in his new Act a clause relating to Land Purchase. As regards the others, he sanctioned and legalised the claims of the tenant under the title of tenant right, taking as his basis what was known in Ireland as the Ulster Custom. This was the object of the Land Act of 1870.[1]

What is this Ulster Custom? It is a collection of local usages dating from the plantation of Ulster by James I., and is an institution to which the tenants of Ulster are all the more attached because it forms a constant point of attack for the landlords. It is more or less the old programme of the Tenant League of 1852, the programme called the three F's:—Free Sale, Fixity of Tenure and Fair Rent. In the rest of Ireland these usages were not unknown. The tenants often sold their holdings; but no customary right had as yet developed similar to this "embryo copyhold,"[2] the Ulster Custom.

By the Act of 1870, Mr. Gladstone legalised the Ulster Custom where it existed, and established for all the rest of Ireland a code reproducing its essential characteristics. The Act does not officially declare the tenant to be a

[1] 33 and 34 Vic., cap. 36.

[2] The "Embryo Copyhold" is the name given by Lord Devon. Note that this Ulster custom itself did not develop into real copyhold similar to the English custom of the 15th and 16th centuries.

co-owner, or officially recognise in him any real right; it proceeds by indirect methods, and assures to him the advantage which logically speaking must flow from a tacit recognition of his co-ownership. It grants, under certain conditions,[3] a right of compensation: firstly, for disturbance in case of arbitrary eviction;[4] secondly, for improvements and outlay on the land whether by the tenant or by his predecessors in title; this, with numerous exceptions,[5] and accompanied by a clause the principle of which is at all events debateable, providing that, in fixing the amount of the tenant's compensation period, account will be taken of the time during which he has enjoyed his improvements; thirdly, for the loss of the price paid by him for his tenant right, that is to say, his right to use the farm, in cases where he originally bought that tenant right and where the landlord refuses him permission to sell it.[6]

3 As regards compensation for disturbance the Act applies only to agricultural holdings, exclusive of the demesnes of landlords and of town parks or urban holdings; it excludes grazing land of a rateable value of £50 or over on which the tenant does not reside. Any contracting-out of their privileges under this Act by tenants whose rateable valuation is less than £50 is held to be null and void.

4 Compensation for disturbance can be claimed by yearly tenants unless their tenancy was created before 1870 and is above a rateable value of £100; and also by leaseholders who, after 1870, obtained leases for less than 31 years. It does not apply to cases of eviction for non-payment of rent (except in a few particular instances), or for non-compliance with statutory conditions as to the tenancy (Act of 1870, sections 3 and 9).

5 No compensation for improvements can be claimed in respect of the following:—Firstly, improvements made before 1870 and more than 20 years before the claim (except in the case of permanent buildings and clearances of land). Secondly, improvements forbidden in writing by the landlord, or made under contract, or made in contravention of a contract not to make them, or indeed those which the landlord has undertaken, under written obligation, to do himself.

Tenants under a lease for 31 years or any longer period, or a lease for lives, have no right to compensation except for permanent buildings and clearances. A tenant quitting his farm voluntarily has no right to compensation if the landlord permits the tenant to sell his tenant-right. The compensation can only be claimed when the tenant is quitting his holding—when the improvements are presumed to have been made by the tenant or his predecessors in title. To this presumption, however, there are certain exceptions. (Compare the Act of 1870, sections 4, 5, and 70).

6 Compensation under this head cannot be claimed if the tenant has claimed compensation for disturbance or compensation under the Ulster Custom. (Act 1870, section 7).

All this reads very well, though at times it appears a little hard upon the landlord.[7] But it must be noticed, in the first place, that there is no protection against arbitrary eviction ; such evictions are merely made more costly for the landlord. It is also noticeable that, while more or less establishing two out of the three F's, this Act omits the third F, viz., Fair Rent, inasmuch as it permits the landlord to raise his rents. What then were its results ? It resulted in the landlords all simultaneously raising their rents. The Bessborough Commission of 1880 leaves us no doubt upon that point.[8] Then they evicted, without compensation, those of their tenants who were unable to pay these famine rents. During the six years which followed the passing of this Act, there were 14,080 evictions, that is to say, about double the average of preceding years. Fixity of tenure without fair rent is an absurdity, as we shall presently read in the Report of the Bessborough Commission. Feeling themselves hit in their privileges, the landlords forthwith begin to show themselves less scrupulous than ever in the use they make of their remaining rights. In short, the tenants did not gain much by the Act of 1870, and a fresh start very soon became necessary.

V.—The Legislation of 1881.

It was Mr. Gladstone himself who was destined to make the fresh start. The circumstances in which he began his work are well known : the agricultural distress of 1879-80 ; the rising *en masse* of the peasants under the banner of the Land League ; the anarchic agitation that very soon left the Government no alternative but

[7] The obligation to repay at the end of a tenancy, and in one payment, the value, often considerable, of these improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors, might, of course, weigh heavily upon landlords ; besides which the compensation (for disturbance) due to a leaseholder for less than 31 years, at the end of his term inevitably conflicted to some extent with existing legal principles.

[8] *Report of the Bessborough Commission*, pages 7, 8 and 10.

that of passing simultaneously a severe Coercion Act and a great measure of agrarian reform, namely, the celebrated Land Act of 1881, which has since been supplemented and improved by the later Acts of 1882, 1887, 1891, and 1896.[1] It was an immense work that Mr. Gladstone accomplished on this occasion; a radical and gigantic reform. Some Parliaments have voted more revolutionary laws; but I know few Acts more audacious than this, more comprehensive or more statesmanlike; and I know none the passing of which does greater honour to the eloquence of its author or to his mastery of the subject. Doubtless there were in the Act of 1881 many reservations and exceptions, and some points were forgotten either intentionally or otherwise.[2] The Irish amendments which Gladstone rejected in 1881 had to be ultimately adopted, after continually renewed agitation. But while we must take account of the opposition of the Irish, and the hostility of the House of Lords, no one can deny that the legislative achievement of the "Grand Old Man" was, nevertheless, extraordinarily effective and far-reaching. In proof of this fact we may note that after having attacked his plan with the utmost violence, the English Conservatives, once they came into power, not only made no attempt to undo what he had done, but actually set themselves to perfect his work in the same spirit and according to the same principles which he had laid down. This was what the late Lord Salisbury called "putting a little good sense into an insensate piece of work." Posterity, however, taking a somewhat different view from that of Lord Salisbury, will not

1 44 and 45 Vic., cap. 49; 45 and 46 Vic., cap. 47; 50 and 51 Vic., cap. 33; 54 and 55 Vic., cap. 48; 59 and 60 Vic., cap 47.

2 In the first place while establishing the new regime he forgot to clear the ground by settling the question of arrears, which, in many cases, amounted to considerable sums. These points had to be taken in hand in 1882. Similarly, he omitted a whole class of tenants, the leaseholders, about 30,000 in number; in 1887 and 1896 it was found necessary to put them on the same footing as the others. Finally, he laid down no data for the valuation of fair rents any more than for the account to be kept with each tenant as to his improvements. This omission had to be supplied in 1896.

deny Mr. Gladstone the honour of having given the Irish peasant his Magna Charta. It is for this, at all events, that the Irish are profoundly grateful to him.

What is the dominant idea in the agrarian legislation of Mr. Gladstone ? It is found that the regime of perfect freedom in agrarian affairs has broken down, or rather, that between landlord and tenant no real freedom of contract is possible. It is necessary therefore to replace the doctrine of *laissez faire* by that of Protection. Relations between landlord and tenant must be regulated by law, seeing that competition alone is not sufficient to regulate them. A system of arbitration must be forced upon both parties. What the Act of 1870 had timidly attempted, the Act of 1881 effectively achieved. It established the regime of the three F's, and the system of dual ownership, that is, of the tenant's co-ownership in the land which he cultivates. The State stood forward as arbitrator between the landlords and their tenants, and undertook the regulation of their connection. We have here one of the vastest operations of State Socialism that has been attempted in modern society ; and it is in this light that it will, we believe, be most interesting to study the chief traits and actual results of the Gladstonian legislation.[3]

The Act of 1881[4] begins by recognising the principle of free sale, or the right to sell holdings. Every tenant can, after notifying his landlord, sell his holding to a

3 To the study of the Act of 1881 we add that of the later Acts passed in 1882 and 1896 to complete the original Act ; but we omit for the present the provisions of the Act of 1881 concerning land purchase.

4 Like the Act of 1870, the Act of 1881 only applies to agricultural holdings. It does not apply either to the demesnes or to the home farms of the landlords ; nor to town parks. It does not affect labourers' cottages, or land let in conacre (*i.e.*, leased for one single harvest) ; or (as amended by later Acts) grazing lands of a rateable value of more than £100 or on which the tenant does not reside. Finally, the Act of 1881 had excepted from its privileges the leaseholder ; the Act of 1887, sections 1-3, and that of 1896, section 15, declared it applicable to leaseholds which were in existence in 1881, or, in certain cases were created at any time up to the 1st January, 1883. (Compare the Act of 1881, section 58 ; the Act of 1887, section 9 ; the Act of 1896, section 5).

new tenant, whom the landlord can only reject "on reasonable grounds." In case of dispute the matter is to be referred to the Land Commission. The landlord, on being notified of the sale, has a right of pre-emption over the land; the price of the pre-emption in case of disagreement is to be fixed by the Land Commission.[5]

Here, then, we have the sanction of the first of the three F's. But what effect was given to the other two, viz., to Fixity of Tenure and to Fair Rent? Every tenant[6] can have recourse to a judicial authority which, on his demand, will fix a fair rent to be paid by him during the first statutory period of 15 years; at the end of 15 years, on a fresh demand being made, there will be a fresh fixing of the rent for a new quindecennial period; and so on for the future. The tenant who has thus acquired a "judicial" tenancy can no longer be expelled from it except for non-payment of the fair rent, or for a violation of the statutory conditions of his tenure. He is forbidden to sub-let or sub-divide the holding, to cause dilapidation, to oppose the landlord in the exercise of his rights, such as shooting and fishing, mines, minerals and the like.[7] He enjoys, in fact, a perpetual tenancy with revision of his rent by the Land Commission Court every 15 years. Fair Rent and Fixity of Tenure are thus bound together, and mutually assured by each other

We must now ask what is the judicial authority called in to act as arbitrator between the landlords and the tenants. The Act of 1881 provides for two. One is the Civil Bill Court, that of the County Court Judge. Practically speaking, the County Courts intervene very little in the application of this Act; in fact, it has even

5 Act of 1881, section 1.

6 Except those who have lost their judicial rights (see earlier). The landlord can also claim to have a fair rent fixed if the tenant has refused the increase of rent demanded of him, or if, for one reason or another, the two parties cannot agree. Act of 1881, section 8.

7 Act of 1881, setions 2 and 5.

Act of 1896 (section 7), which tempered to a certain extent the prohibition against sub-letting and sub-dividing holdings.

been proposed to deprive them of this special jurisdiction.[8] The second and principal authority is the special tribunal created by the Act, viz., the Land Commission, which includes a Judicial Commissioner, who has the rank of Judge of the Supreme Court, and was assisted originally by two, and afterwards by four, Commissioners.[9] This Land Commission sits in Dublin. It has the characteristics and the powers of a Court of Justice; it is a person in the eyes of the law, and can possess property; its judgments are final with regard to points of fact, but can be appealed against on points of law before the Court of Appeal. In accordance with the suggestion of the Act, it at once organised throughout the country various sub-commissions composed of three (or nowadays two) sub-commissioners.[10] These officials decide, in the first instance, all cases relating to fair rent, except re-hearings (that is to say, appeals) before the Land Commission. This duty of hearing appeals in the provinces[11] is delegated by the Land Commission to a certain number of its members in turn.

We may complete our review by pointing out a few of the other accessory provisions of the Act of 1881 or of the later Acts. In the first place, instead of going before

[8] Every Judgment given in the Civil Bill Court can be appealed against before the Land Commission (Act of 1881, section 47; and Act of 1903, section 88).

[9] The number of Commissioners was changed from 2 to 4 by the Act of 1885. The Act of 1891 gave them the status of County Court Judges; moreover, the Land Act of 1903 appointed one of the Commissioners second Judicial Commissioner, and authorised the Lord Chancellor to select any Judge of the High Court to act, if necessary, as Supplementary Judicial Commissioner (Section 86).

[10] Before 1903 every Sub-Commission was composed of a legal Assistant Commissioner and two lay Assistant Commissioners. Since the Act of 1903 (Section 87) every Sub-Commission must consist of a lay and a legal Assistant Commissioner. By Section 44 of the Act of 1881 every case may also be heard in the first instance by a single member of the Land Commission sitting alone. As a matter of fact, cases are always heard in the first instance by the Sub-Commission.

[11] According to the Act of 1881 (section 44) the appeal was to be heard by three Commissioners, or at least two, in case of the third being unable to attend. According to the Act of 1903 (section 88) a judicial commissioner may decide these appeals with the assistance of a lay assessor.

the judicial authority, the landlord and the tenant can come to a friendly agreement in order to fix the fair rent of a piece of land for 15 years; but once the agreement has been placed in the hands of the judicial authority, the holding becomes "judicial," just as if the case had been decided by the Land Commission.[12] On the other hand, in order to avoid coming under the Act, the parties may, with the approval of the court, agree upon a lease for 31 years or more, or on a perpetual lease (which is very seldom put into practice).[13] With this exception, any contracting out of the benefits of the Act, if it proceeds from a tenant of less than £150 valuation, is held to be null and void.[14] A tenant who does not pay his rent is liable to have his goods seized, or to be evicted, after judgment has been given against him[15]; but for six months he will retain the right to buy back his holding.[16] Eviction itself has been replaced, in the case of all holdings of less than £100 sterling, by the serving of a notice to quit, which notice is served not less than six weeks after the decree of ejectment; after which the tenant, though he still reserves, during the regulation six months, his right of sale or of redemption, is merely considered as a caretaker or a guardian until after six months he is actually ejected: this is the celebrated "Eviction made Easy clause."[17] Finally we may ask: What becomes of the tenant who has lost his judicial rights? Like the man whose tenancy was created

[12] Act of 1881, section 8 (6). The parties may also submit their case to an arbitrator (Act of 1881, section 40); but this is never done.

[13] Act of 1881, sections 10 and 12.

[14] *Ib.*, section 22.

[15] According to the Act of 1887 (section 30) the Land Commission has power to suspend eviction during three months in the case of a holding of less than £50 rateable value by ordering the arrears to be paid by instalments. Moreover, according to the Act of 1896 (section 16), when the tenant is more than two years in arrears with his rent, he cannot, if he pays or offers two years arrears, be evicted for non-payment of the surplus.

[16] Act of 1881, section 13.

[17] Act of 1887, section 7.

after January 1st, 1883,[18] he is deprived of the privileges of the Act of 1881; he finds himself wholly under the regime of Free Contract, except for the provisions of the Act of 1870.[19] The legislator here shows his desire to reach, at some more or less future date, a time when he will be able to dispense with the system of agrarian protection established by the Act of 1881, and to return to a normal state of things by assimilating the Irish tenant to the English tenant.[20]

Let us examine now the statistics and the facts of this legislation. Mr. Gladstone had hoped that the judicial authorities would not have to make great reductions in the rents. His expectations on this point were singularly mistaken. On the 31st March, 1906, 360,135 tenants had obtained the fixing of a judicial fair rent for a first quindecennial period; this fair rent gave an average reduction of 20.7 per cent. on the amount of the former rents (the net total of the reduced rents amounting to £5,715,158). At the same date, 120,515 tenants had had their fair rent fixed for the second quindecennial period with a further reduction averaging 19.7 per cent. on the rents of the first period (the net total of the reduced rents being £1,728,600). The average rent fixed by the Land Commission for the first statutory period works out at about 12 shillings an acre; the average figure for the second statutory period at about 10 shillings an acre.[21]

[18] Act of 1881, section 57. These new tenancies may come into being either through the letting of lands formerly directly cultivated by the landlord, or else by the re-letting of tenancies which were formerly judicial but whose possessors have forfeited their rights. No new tenancy is created when the tenant sells his holding in the ordinary way to a new occupier as his direct successor.

[19] He is a *future tenant* as opposed to the *present tenants* who are *judicial tenants* (Act of 1881, sections 4 and 57).

[20] We must also note another provision of the Act of 1881, which regulates the succession to judicial holdings (section 3). If the tenant leaves his holding to more than one person, or dies intestate leaving several next-of-kin, these next-of-kin must agree to name one of their number to succeed to the tenancy; otherwise the tenancy will be sold. Finally, if a tenant dies intestate without next-of-kin the tenancy returns to the landlord. The object of the Act throughout is to prevent sub-division.

[21] *Report of the Irish Land Commissioners* for 1905-1906, page 3.

VI.—The Complaints of the Landlords.

Everyone, I suppose, will realise how Mr. Gladstone's legislative operation was regarded by the patients upon whom he operated, that is to say, the landlords and their allies the Conservatives. To them it seemed not merely "dishonest" in the highest degree, to quote Mr. Lecky the historian,[1] but even Jacobin and revolutionary; in fact the work of a man who meant, according to a now famous saying, "to relegate to Saturn all the laws of Political Economy." The Bill of 1881 had hardly been introduced at Westminster before the whole of the Press was filled with protests. Within twenty-four hours the Duke of Argyll had retired from the Gladstone Cabinet. Lord Randolph Churchill denounced the three F's. as "an impossibility and an immorality." "They stand for Force, Fraud, and Folly," said Sir Stafford Northcote. From that day to this, an uninterrupted concert of claims and complaints has continued on the part of the Irish landlords and their English supporters. The whole world, they tell us, has been turned upside down! It means chaos and anarchy. The State, which in the old days "planted" us down in Ireland, is now supplanting us in our rights, shutting off our properties from the free play of commerce and from the advantages of credit, turning them into one vast mortmain from which we are merely to receive an allowance. Giving the tenants real right in the land—what is this but a legalised filching from the owner, of a portion of his property? What else can one call it but legal confiscation, first, to cut down a man's rents by means of an untrustworthy tribunal, and then to reduce his position from that of full ownership to that of a mere annuitant or creditor of his own property? It is simply and solely because you are intimidated by the threats of the agitators, that you are now

1 *Democracy and Liberty*. London, 1896, p. 182. A book to be consulted for criticisms of the Gladstonian legislation.

organising official pillage, and throwing the graziers to the Nationalist wolves. You are establishing social demoralisation, setting a premium on idleness and anarchy, and destroying all ideas of honesty or respect for contracts!

There is some truth in these criticisms, in spite of their evident exaggeration. But how can one overlook the state of things which necessitated and therefore justified the great Gladstonian reforms? A past filled with exactions and oppression of which the living generation of landlords was reaping the benefit, even though it might not be responsible for them! The actual misery of those peasants whose case cried for help, at any cost, in order to enable them to live; and finally those terrible years of 1880 and 1881, when famine appeared almost as imminent as in 1847, and when landlords were evicting their tenants by the hundred, although each eviction, in Mr. Gladstone's words, amounted to a sentence of death! In no state of society can it be allowed that landed property should have an absolute right to enjoy with impunity the *jus abutendi*, seeing that of all forms of property, it is that which in one sense owes most to society. It is a melancholy fact, but it is true, that when the laws have sanctioned abuses until those abuses have accumulated to the point of identifying supreme legality with supreme injustice—*summum jus summa injuria*—then, any kind of reform will inevitably work some wrong against established rights: that is to say, against rights which, though they may have remained legal, have ceased to be legitimate

Admitted! you will reply. But it is none the less true that Mr. Gladstone had promised to compensate the injured landlords, and that he never did so. England had not the courage and generosity to make a sacrifice for the peace of Ireland similar to that made by France at the Restoration, and known as the "Milliard des Émigrés." Were the Irish landlords entitled to compensation? It is a delicate question, Gladstone, as has been

said,[2] no more created the duality of ownership than he created the lakes and rivers of Ireland; he merely legalised a custom the guiding principle of which had been for centuries more or less accepted in that country. What is it that the landlords have been actually despoiled of? Simply the right of taking full advantage of the competition for the land; of exploiting the abnormal and unnatural situation which gave them a land monopoly as opposed to the Irish people. It must also be remembered, that but for the intervention of the State, Ireland was advancing towards a revolution, and that in the words of Lord Derby, "Men whom a lifeboat has dragged out from a vessel going to pieces on the rocks must not complain too loudly if they lose some of their property in the process." [3]

The great mistake of the reformers of 1881 is clearly revealed by an examination of the facts. In the first place, they suggested no remedy for the two constitutional evils of Irish land, namely, the excessive sub-division of holdings and the excessive extent of the grazing tracts; or, to put it otherwise, they only considered the questions of "rent" and of "fixity of tenure," to the exclusion of all other data of the problem. Secondly, they were mistaken in regarding the new regime as one that could be normal and permanent. Mr. Gladstone's reforms did not provide a final solution of the agrarian question in Ireland. They merely offered a provisional compromise, an agreement that was hastily forced upon the two parties in the suit and was only a half-way house towards the solution.

The Act of 1881 was necessary; it brought and continues to bring immense good to the country. Nevertheless the

2 O'Connor-Morris, *Present Irish Questions*, London and New York, 1901, p. 183.

3 Speech of January 4th, 1882 (*Annual Register*, 1882, p. 4). We must remember also that the landlords were freed from all local taxation in their rented lands (Local Government Act of 1898) and that they received from the State in 1900 some important advantages with regard to the redemption of tithe-rent-charges.

system established by it is, as a matter of fact, no longer bearable for anyone. Why should this be the case? That is the question which now remains for us to consider.

VII.—The Practical Results of the Gladstonian Legislation.

The first great characteristic of the Gladstonian legislation is duality of ownership, an arrangement as to whose value opinion is practically unanimous in Ireland. It is an unhealthy system, unsound both economically and socially, this dual ownership, which turns the landlord and tenant into co-proprietors of the soil.[1] It paralyses agriculture by preventing the investment of capital on either side, and by destroying all interest of either landlord or tenant in the good farming of the land. The landlord feels himself no longer called upon to do anything for his property, and has no care left but that of collecting his rents. The tenant, on the other hand, refrains from making any improvement or advances that might cause his rent to be raised at the next quindecennial revision; the land is thus starved both of labour and of capital. We may add, also, that the new regime gives rise to an infinity of ruinous law-suits between the co-owners. Ireland, according to a common saying, lives "under a regime of law-suits lasting fifteen years, and renewable for ever." For a quarter of a century there has been only one class of men whose affairs have prospered, namely, the solicitors. Their number has increased by 30 per cent. One may call Ireland a lawyer's paradise!

It might, perhaps, be expected that joint-ownership, in

[1] Nevertheless duality of ownership has still a few defenders in Ireland, and among English Liberals. *Cf.* Shaw Lefevre, *Agrarian Tenures, London*, 1893, p. 148. Moreover this regime is not so exceptional as one might suppose. One finds a historical precedent for it in the Roman emphyteusis, and more or less close analogies in the systems of metayage and emphyteusis which exist in several European countries.

spite of its drawbacks, would, at all events, have proved successful in allaying the ill results of free competition for the land. Unfortunately this is not so. Competition no longer affects the farms the rents of which are judicially fixed, but it makes itself felt with regard to the tenant-right (the tenant's right of occupation), which has become more than ever a marketable commodity, to be bought or sold, and which has continued to rise in price according as the rents have fallen. When a peasant takes a farm, he is obliged to pay his predecessor, as the price of his tenant right, a sum of money, often considerable, and sometimes amounting to ten or twenty times the rent of the land,[2] and this merely to enjoy the right of paying an equally heavy rent to the landlord! The tenant who was in possession in 1881 is the only man who has been able to enjoy gratuitously the advantages of the Act of 1881. If the Gladstonian legislation had contented itself with establishing fixity of tenure and fair rent, it would have left a work endowed with stability; but by legalising the third F., Free Sale, it gave free play to the struggle for land. A fresh proof that if you close the door on competition, competition will fly in by the window!

One last word as to dual ownership. When two parties have been at war for centuries about a scrap of land, a treaty which brings them joint dominion over that plot will never bring them peace. In this instance the agrarian treaty drawn up by Mr. Gladstone has had the result of creating a wider gulf than ever between landlord and tenant. It has organised a latent but continuous state of war on the Irish land. Gladstone, in Lord Dufferin's phrase, had forced landlord and tenant into the same bed, and one of them would necessarily end by kicking out the other.

Let us pass on to the second great characteristic of the

2 Cases have been known where it amounted to 40 or 50 times the figure of the rent (*Report of Fry Commission*, Appendix, p. 106 and the following). The tenant right represents not only the right of occupation, but the value of the buildings the improvements or outlay on the soil, the sowing, etc.

scheme ; the general and compulsory fixing of rents by a judicial authority. What have been the practical results of that gigantic experiment in State Socialism ? [3] We may say at once that they have satisfied no one. Nobody has confidence in the land court (the Land Commission). Moreover it is an obvious and absolute impossibility for a commission of six or seven members, even though it were helped by a hundred sub-commissioners (sub-confiscators, as the landlords call them), to fix a fair rent in half a million individual cases, all different and all more or less complex. So loud were the recriminations from all parties that in 1897 the Conservative Government appointed a Commission of Enquiry, presided over by Sir E. Fry, to make a practical study of the working of the system.[4] Let us, in turn, make a study of the results of their enquiry.

The first point that strikes one is that, between members of the Land Commission, there are sharp divergencies and a constant conflict of opinion ; "they differ among themselves as to the principles and methods "[5] which should form a basis of their work. They have laid down no general rule for the determination of "fair rent ;" the sub-commissioners whose duty it is to decide in the first instance, have found themselves left to their individual judgment ; among them there is "neither a common understanding of the law, or anything approaching to uniformity in practice." When, by chance, their decisions agree, in spite of the differences in their basis of calculation, "such agreement is, if possible, more strange than their differences." They get through their

3 The Land Commission costs the budget £140,000 a year. The very smallest action costs the tenant, under various headings, a sum about equal to the first annual reduction which he receives.

4 V. *Report* and the volumes of *Evidence* of the *Commissioners of Inquiry into the procedure and practice and methods of valuation followed by the Land Commission, etc.* (Dublin, 1898). The majority of this Commission was entirely favourable to the landlord party. Four years earlier the workings of the agrarian legislation had already been made a subject of official enquiry by a Parliamentary Commission called the Morley Committee.

5 *Report*, p. 16.

work in a wholesale manner or by rule of thumb: some of them have been seen to decide fifty cases in an afternoon and begin work again next morning.[6]

The result is an enormous number of rehearings before the Land Commission, that is to say, appeals against the decisions of the sub-commissioners. There were 90,632 of them, within 25 years, and at the present moment it is reckoned that half the decisions as to rents within the second statutory period give rise to an appeal, although the expenses of an appeal are very high (£10, on an average) and out of all proportion to the results obtained.[7] The Land Commission is blocked up by them, and though it decides its cases "with a rapidity and with a silence as to the grounds of the decisions which create dissatisfaction in the minds of the litigants whose property is at stake," it had 13,808 appeals in arrear on March 31st, 1904, and 9,043 on March 31st, 1906.[8]

Everyone is in agreement as regards these general criticisms. The disagreement begins when one starts to

[6] *Ib.*, p. 13.—*Cf. Morley Committee's Report.*—The sub-commissioners are chosen from among barristers or solicitors with at least six years practice, or among persons with a special competence in the valuation of land. As a matter of fact many of them are ill prepared for their duties; often they have another profession as well. (*Report*, pp. 12, 14, 26). Their examination of the land is usually very superficial; nevertheless they undertake to value the rent acre by acre, or to give a separate estimate of the value of the land from that of the buildings, all of which things are declared by English experts to be impossible. *Cf. Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation* (*Ireland*), London, 1900, vol. V., pp. 10, 194. *Cf.* the articles of the Rev. T. A. Finlay, S.J., in the *New Ireland Review* on the *Art of Rent Fixing* (July, 1901, p. 239, etc., September, etc.) To despise red tape is a good thing; but it is pushed almost too far when a man gives judgment "by post card," especially when he afterwards delays sending the official schedule until after the time for appealing has expired. (*Report of the Fry Commission*, p. 15).

[7] *Report of the Land Commission* for 1905-1906, p. 3. *Hansard*, March 25th, 1902. *Report of the Morley Committee.* The latter report shows that in 1894 the net result of the appeals had resolved itself into an insignificant rise of 0.02 per cent. on the amount of the rent (say £2,383); the corresponding costs amounted to £250,000. There is a desire to abolish the right of appeal in small cases (for instance in all cases of a rent below £30, as in the Scotch Crofter's Act).

[8] *Reports of the Land Commission* for 1903-1904 and 1905-1906. *Fry Commission Report*, p. 15. The appeals are decided "deuced badly." It is a "judicial farce," said a member of the Land Commission (*cf.* O'Connor Morris, *Present Irish Questions*, p. 217).

criticise the reduction of rents effected by the Land Commission.

The landlords, for their part, have from the very first protested with the utmost energy against the reductions of rents which deprived them, in the first instance, of 20.7 per cent., and then, in the second instance, of 19.7 per cent. of their income from land. They have asserted that these reductions are out of all proportion to the fall in the value of land-produce, an assertion which is, at all events, debateable. They have based their arguments on the fact that while their rents were being reduced by two-fifths, the price of the tenant-right continued to rise higher and higher. Now for this there is an explanation. Surely the value of tenant-right represents something entirely different (buildings,improvements, investments in the land of all sorts) from the value of the bare soil let by the landlord to the tenant. But as a final resort they obtained an examination of their grievances by an official commission of enquiry, the Fry Commission, which, although it justified their complaints on certain points of detail,[9] was unable to admit their accuracy as regards the essential point, namely, the reduction of rents. "We thus feel ourselves unable to conclude that the machinery of the land statutes," says the Report,[10] "has been uniformly worked with injustice to the landlords."

In view of the general discontent among the landlords one would suppose that the tenants at all events ought to be satisfied. Unfortunately it is not so. They are quite as far from being contented as the landlords. They consider the reductions insufficient : [11] they say that they

9 It declared in the first place that the sub-commissions sometimes took account as regards the tenants, of a sort of *occupation interest* not provided for by the law ; secondly, that they sometimes showed excessive indulgence for tenants who, for their own purposes, allowed the land to deteriorate. (*Report*, p. 21 and 26).

10 *Ib.*, p. 26.

11 They complain that, in case of a tenant wishing to sell his tenant right and of the landlord exercising his right of preemption, the Land Commission fixes the price of preemption far too low ; in fact far below what the tenant would get in the open market ; thereby, they say,

are unjustly treated; they accuse the Land Commission of being biassed in favour of the landlords. And a close examination proves that their complaints are not always unfounded, even though, on the other hand, they are not always justifiable.

They assert that the average reduction under the Land Commission is insufficient, first in view of the average fall in the price of land produce during the last 25 years, and secondly as compared with the average reduction in English rents during the same period. Statistics in hand, they undertake to prove that the burden of loss due to the cheapening of agricultural produce has been unjustly divided between the interested parties by the Land Commission: that the tenants bear two-thirds and the landlords only one-third. As regards the comparison with England one reads in an official report that agricultural rents in England, where the tenant generally makes no improvements, and possesses no legal property in the holding, have undergone much heavier reductions within the same period, by voluntary action of the landlords."[12] One hesitates to base any opinion on the value of these assertions, when one considers the extreme delicacy of all such comparisons; and still more when one remembers the great number and diversity of the elements that must enter into any estimate concerning that primordial element, the selling price of agricultural produce: for instance the cost of labour, the cost of feeding stuffs and of machinery, the expenses of transit, the cost of living in country districts, and so on.

destroying Free Sale. In principle the criticism seems to be ill-founded. The whole aim of the Acts of 1881 was to suppress free competition for land. The Land Commission therefore fixes the price of preemption at a lower rate than that under free competition, just as it fixes the "fair rents" at a lower rate than those obtainable under free competition.

12 *Report of the Morley Committee*, p. VI. (Sec. *Fair Rent*). *Cf. Fry Commission Report*, p. 25: In England many farms can no longer find a tenant; in many places all rent is a thing of the past and the land is going to waste. *Cf.* the interesting enquiry of Mr. Rider Haggard, *Rural England* (London, 1902): the average fall in English rents since 1870 amounts to as much as 50 per cent.

What one may boldly assert is, that as a matter of fact there are to-day large numbers of tenants who pay excessive and unjust rents. For this there are two assignable reasons.

The first is that out of over half a million agricultural tenants, there are, as we have stated, only 360,135—say less than two-thirds—who, by March 31st, 1906, had had their rents fixed for the first term of fifteen years; and that out of those 360,135 tenants there were, at the same date, only 120,515 who had had their rents fixed for the second term, about half of which has already elapsed. This means that a large number of tenants find themselves excluded from having recourse to the Land Commission; debarred from it either in law because they have lost their judicial rights, or else in fact, for one of many reasons; either because they consider the expense and delay prohibitive, or else because their landlord deters them from it by threats of a lawsuit or by other means, or, finally and more usually, because they are dragging in their train a list of unpaid arrears.[13]

There is a second reason why the tenants are often compelled to pay excessive rents. It is that the Land Commission, contrary to the spirit of the law, finds ways of taxing the tenant's improvements and the investments which he has made in the land apart from his normal expenses of cultivation. It sometimes even includes the indirect products of his industry. It has always done this; at one time indeed it did so on a far larger scale. Let us consider how it has been able to deceive the intentions of the legislator.

The Act of 1881 contained no definition of "fair rent;"

[13] The landlord would evict them on account of their arrears if they summoned him before the Land Commission. We may add that some tenants abstain from going before the Land Commission because the landlord has voluntarily allowed them equivalent reductions. Others, more numerous, were excluded from all recourse to the Land Commission as being cultivators of demesne lands, of cattle breeding farms with a rental of over £100, of home farms or town parks (Act of 1881, Sect. 58). The number of tenants who have lost their judicial rights is estimated at 50,000.

this was one of its serious omissions. It merely provided that "a fair rent" was to be fixed, "having regard to the interests of the landlord and tenant respectively, and considering all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district."

It added that "no rent shall be allowed or made payable in any proceedings under this Act in respect of improvements made by the tenant or his predecessors in title, and for which, in the opinion of the court, the tenant or his predecessor in title shall not have been paid or otherwise compensated by the landlord or his predecessors in title."[14] Now, the Act had not been in force for six months before these provisions were reduced to a dead letter by the Dublin Court of Appeal. In *Adams* v. *Dunseath* (February, 1882), it decided first that they only applied to improvements provided for in the Act of 1870, to the exclusion of a great number of improvements that are excluded by that Act; and secondly, that under the provisions of the same Act of 1870 the fact that a tenant had, for a longer or shorter period enjoyed the benefit of his improvements, might be taken into consideration by the judge as being an equivalent for compensation, and as serving to limit the reductions in rent which would have been allowed for these improvements.[15] This two-fold decision was not merely of doubtful equity, but was in direct contradiction to the formally expressed intentions of the House of Commons. The Commons in 1881 had rejected by large majorities two amendments that would have established

[14] Section 8, Sub-secs. 1 and 9. The second of these provisions was added to the Act on the motion of Mr. Healy (it was called the *Healy Clause*). The importance of these improvements and outlay on the land is obvious.

[15] It is, in short, the assimilation of two entirely different rights: the right (under the Act of 1881) of a tenant to have his own improvements exempted from rents, and the right (under the Act of 1870) to be allowed compensation in capital for the same improvements, when he is leaving the land. Take, for instance, the case of improvements made by the tenant but not suitable to the holding. It is evident that under the Act of 1870 these were justly excluded from any right of compensation in capital. But is it right to make a tenant pay extra rent on such improvements? Evidently not!

precisely this two-fold rule thus adopted by the judicial authority.[16] Nevertheless it remained law for fifteen years, until the Act of 1896 brought the Irish judges to reason by formally re-affirming and re-establishing, on these two points, the principle the enactment of which had been intended in 1881.

This same Act of 1896, moreover, laid down some very precise rules for the determination of "fair rent," and as to reductions for improvements carried out by the tenants.[17] But the Irish judicial authorities have again succeeded in twisting them so as to provide a method of unjustly raising the rents.

In the first place, it is an accepted legal principle[18] that, with certain exceptions, all improvements and outlay are considered in the absence of proof to the contrary to be the work of the tenant, and not of the landlord. But as regards this presumption the Land Commission simply acts as if it did not exist. In practice it compels the tenants to specify in writing the improvements for which they claim compensation, and to prove that they are material. Consequently the tenants, for want of the means of proof, are often deprived of reductions in their rent to which their improvements entitled them.[19]

Again, the Act of 1896 (Section 1) directs that in each case the Land Commission shall estimate successively, first the gross figure at which a fair rent would be fixed if all the improvements had been made or acquired by the landlord; secondly, the amount to be deducted for those improvements made by the tenant, so as to arrive at, thirdly, the net fair rent. This is what the Land Commission does in each case on a special document called the pink schedule; only it does it in a way that is unfair to the tenants. It begins, undoubtedly, by estimating the gross fair rent; but it estimates it exclusive of

[16] *Cf. Morley Committee's Report*, paragraph *Improvement*.
[17] V. Section I. of the Act of 1896.
[18] Act of 1870, Section 5. Act of 1896, Section 1 (10).
[19] *Fry Commission Report*, p. 12—*Morley Committee, Evidence*, question 1573, 4004, 5385.

buildings, and then afterwards adds in the fair rent for the buildings. From the total thus obtained it then proceeds to deduct the improvements made by the tenant. But the question arises :—How can one estimate the fair rent of a bare piece of land, exclusive of the buildings ? It is manifestly impossible to separate the land from the buildings, or the buildings from the land. And what are the results of this system, in practice ? In practice the Commissioners, when estimating the fair rent of a farm "exclusive of the buildings on it," unconsciously take account of those buildings in their valuation. They then count them a second time over when they are adding the rent of the buildings to their first estimate, for the purpose of obtaining the total "gross fair rent." In this total therefore the buildings have been reckoned twice over, and it is the tenant who bears the losses resulting from this miscalculation.[20]

Another point. The fair rent is to be fixed, as has been said, "having regard to all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district :" it is upon this phrase that the Land Commission bases its claim to impose a surplus rent on the products of the tenants' industry or on the interest of their capital. George Curran, for instance, held a farm of 7 acres in the county of Armagh, on the Cope estate. He planted, at his own expense, an acre of orchard ; expended labour on it, and denied himself any profit from that acre of land during all the time that the trees were growing to maturity. At the end of that period the Land Commission raised his rent by £1 (one-eighth of the whole) on account of the increased value given to his holding by the orchard. They justified this decision on the ground that his land is in a district suitable to the cultivation of fruit trees, a fact which (according to their interpretation of the Act) must be taken into consideration

20 It is complained also that in calculating the net cost, the Land Commission does not take account of the cost of repairs nor of the insurance of buildings (*Cf. Royal Commission on Local Taxation*, 1900. vol. V. (Ireland), p. 195, 196).

when fixing the rent.[21] Another case: that of a tenant whose farm was situated by the seashore. At low tide he used to go waist-deep into the water to cut the seaweed from the rocks, and then would pile it in heaps and burn it for the purpose of extracting soda and iodide. In this manner he secured a small profit which caused his rent to be raised. This was on the estate of Colonel Nolan. Again: Patrick Mac Morrow, a tenant on the Phibbs estate near Sligo, built at his own expense, on one of his fields near the road, a public house and a building which gave accommodation to the police. On this account his rent was raised from £6 15s. to £10.— Are not these curious methods of defeating the most explicit provisions of the Act to the effect that rent is not payable on improvements made by the tenants.[22]

Such decisions are obviously but little calculated to inspire the tenants with confidence in the courts, that is to say, in the Land Commission. In practice, rather than be duped into doing their landlord's work for love, the tenants abstain from making any improvements. Insecurity, that curse of agriculture, is upheld by the judicial authorities. All progress is paralysed by this spectre of higher rents resulting from improvement. The tenants live in a state of anxiety and inertia. This is the result, not so much of the Gladstonian legislation itself, as of its biassed application by the Land Commission and the Irish Court of Appeal, which have been accused, and not without truth, of having done their utmost to destroy the agrarian laws instead of applying them.[23]

[21] Judgment of December 3rd, 1898.

[22] Mr. Murrough O'Brien, Land Commissioner, with regard to the Phibbs and the Mac Morrow cases above cited. *Cf.* Father Finlay's articles *The Art of Rent Fixing*, in the *New Ireland Review* (May to September, 1901).

[23] T. W. Russell. *Ireland and the Empire*, London, 1901, p. 161, etc. This insecurity is the principal obstacle to the development of agricultural co-operation. (V. Part III., Chapter iii.).

CHAPTER II.—THE LAND QUESTION (*Continued.*[1])

As a temporary palliation and compromise the Gladstonian legislation was both necessary and beneficial. But it was in no sense a solution of the problem; and the definite and permanent solution of the land question it certainly was not, and could not claim to be. This fact is now admitted by everyone; by the government, the landlords, and the tenants alike. Tenants, landlords and government, in fact everybody, is discontented for various and usually contradictory reasons, with the regime of "judicial liquidation" established by Mr. Gladstone. Everyone declares that it cannot continue and that an immediate end should be made of it.

I.—Land Purchase: The First Attempts.

But how is it to be ended? What is to be the true and final solution of the problem? Over twenty-five years ago the solution was formulated by the founders of the Land League, Michael Davitt and Charles Parnell: the landlord must be bought out, and the peasant must be made proprietor of the land that he is cultivating.

1 Bibliography, Chap. I. V. especially, on the Land Act of 1903, our communication to the Société d'Économic Sociale (January 11th, 1904, *Réforme Sociale* of March 1st following). Bechaux, *La Question Agraire en Irlande*, Paris, 1906. Walker and Farran, *The Law of Land Purchase in Ireland*, Dublin, 1906. *The Irish Land Act, 1903, Explained*, by G. J. and F. Fottrell, solicitors, Dublin, 1903 (with the complete text of the law). *The Land Conference and its Critics*, by W. O'Brien, Dublin, 1904. *The Annual Reports of the Estates Commissioners*, Dublin. *Cf.* the Parliamentary debate on the Act (*Hansard*, March 25th to the end of August, 1903). *Cf. Hansard*, 24th March, 1904, July 8th, 1904, March 9th, 1905, July 20th, 1905, and May 3rd, 1906, later Parliamentary debates.

By this two-fold process there will be eradicated once and for all that plague of the land in Ireland, landlordism.[2] Nowadays there is no question of doling out assistance here and there, in small driblets to a few individual tenants possessing the privilege of buying their holdings (as Gladstone did at the recommendation of John Bright, in the Acts of 1870 and 1881).[3] There must be a regularly organised comprehensive scheme for the purchase of the soil of Ireland, by means of a system of general advances out of the public funds. I do not say that it will be an easy matter. The great scheme of expropriation which Mr. Gladstone had prepared in 1885, as an accompaniment to his first Home Rule Bill, would probably have proved impracticable (in any case it never even reached the

2 V. the plan adopted by the *Land League Convention*, April, 1880, in Davitt's *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, London and New York, 1904, p. 241, etc. We may note that no responsible organ of the Land League or the National League has ever recommended taking the land by force or expelling the landlords: the plans proposed have never been founded on any basis but that of legal expropriation by means of a fair indemnification. Personally Mr. Davitt, following the doctrines of Fintan Lalor and Henry George, would have been in favour of a plan for the "nationalisation" of the soil; this plan has never found any support in Ireland, where, on the contrary, the idea of individual ownership is all powerful.

3 The Act of 1870 (Section 32, etc., Section 44, etc.) authorised the Board of Works to advance two-thirds of their purchase price to all tenants who had bought the ownership of their holdings before the *Landed Estates Court*. This Loan was to be repaid in 35 annuities of 5 per cent. of the capital. 877 tenants availed themselves of these provisions in the Act of 1870. The Act of 1881 (Section 24 and the following Sections) authorised the *Land Commission* to advance three-quarters of the purchase money to tenants who wished to buy their farms. The repayment of the loan was to be made as under the Act of 1870; 731 tenants availed themselves of these provisions. The Act of 1881 also authorised the *Land Commission* under certain conditions, to buy properties in order to re-sell them to the farmers (Section 26, modified by the Act of 1885, Section 5). These provisions produced only very few applications and were abolished by the Act of 1903, which laid down new rules for the purchase of estates. Why is it that all these provisions have produced so little practical result? Because the tenants were allowed only a portion of the purchase money, and were therefore obliged to borrow the rest at usurious rates of interest. We may add that the Act of 1869 for the Disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland had made provision for the sale to the farmers of the church lands, the price to be paid as regards 25 per cent. in cash, and the remainder in 32 annuities of 5.33 per cent. 6,057 farms out of 8,432 were thus sold to the tenants.

point of being debated).[4] But it is the true solution, the necessary and final solution of the land problem. And it is so genuinely the Conservative solution of the question, that the Conservative Government has adopted it for its own, as an opposition policy to the Gladstonian legislation. The Conservatives, indeed, began to apply it experimentally and on a small scale as long as twenty years ago. This was the aim of the Land Purchase Act of 1885, called after its author the Ashbourne Act.[5]

To sum up the system. In case of a landlord wishing to sell, the Imperial Treasury advances the whole of the purchase money on certain guarantees, and provides for repayment by the tenant-purchaser in 49 annuities, respectively equal to 4 per cent. of the purchase price (including interest and sinking-fund): a fund of 5 millions sterling (increased to 10 millions by an Act of 1889) is established for the purpose of supplying these advances.[6] As the purchase prices ruled low (they average about 17½ years purchase) the annuities payable by tenant-purchasers, far from exceeding their former rents, show an average rate of about one-third less. These figures prove the immense advantage of the system for the farmers.[7] We may add that, to become binding, these

4 The estates of landlords were to be bought by the farmers at 20 years purchase (after deducting expenses), through Treasury Loans repayable in 50 years.

5 *Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 48 and 49 Victoria, Ch. 73.* This Act has been amended by two Acts of 1888 and 1889 (51 and 52 Vict. ch. 49; and 52 and 53 Vict., ch. 13).

6 The Act of 1885, Sections 2 and 4; Act of 1888, Section 1. The usual maximum of these loans is £3,000 per tenant. The *Land Commission* can raise it to £5,000 (Act of 1888, Section 2). One-fifth of the price is retained as guarantee deposit by the Commission, and is only paid to the landlord when the repayments to the Treasury have reached a total equivalent to it in amount (Act of 1885, Section 3). The guarantee deposit bears interest at 3 per cent. The Act of 1896 (Section 29) has authorised the *Land Commission* to exempt the tenants from the guarantee deposit. The Act of 1889 (Section 1) authorises the *Land Commission* to advance loans to a tenant-purchaser, to enable him to buy supplementary land, under certain conditions (this provision has never, I think, been applied in practice).

7 *Report of the Land Commission for* 1905-1906, p. 94 and 101. The average difference between the annuity and the former rent comes out at 31.6 per cent.

transactions must be ratified by the Land Commission (the number of the Commissioners being increased by two), which, after due enquiry and inspection can refuse its approval, firstly, if the price is too low and therefore calculated to injure superior interests to those of the landlord ; or secondly, if, on the other hand, the price is too high, that is to say, more than the true value of the land which forms the security of the Treasury.

The experiment of 1885 succeeded beyond all hopes. By 1891 the 10 millions sterling assigned for it had already been exhausted, and 25,367 tenants had been turned into owners of their farms.[8] Its success even alarmed some of the landlords, who began to fear that the farmers would combine and force them to sell their land. However this may be, in 1891 the Conservative Government passed a new Act, which, under pretence of regulating the progress of the operations, complicated it to such an extent that the machine almost stopped working.[9] In 1896, by another Act, the existing evils were slightly remedied, but only to an insufficient extent. It possessed, however, at least one advantage, namely, that of allowing the tenant-buyers to obtain reductions on their annuities of from 15 to 18 per cent.—on their undertaking, of course, to pay them for a longer period of time, in fact for about seventy years instead of only forty-nine. This assurance against eventual risks which might result from a fall in the income obtainable from the land, constituted a

[8] *Land Commission Report*, 1905 to 1906, p. 94 and 95. It includes 2,029 tenants who became owners on 101 estates bought by the Commission.

[9] *Purchase of Land* (*Ireland*) *Act* (54 and 55 Vict. ch. 48). The advances are not to be made in money, but in Land Stock issued by the Treasury and bearing interest at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. (Section 1 to 3). A maximum advance (raised several times since then) is fixed for each county (Section 9). If the annuity is less than the former rent by over 20 per cent., it is to be raised for the first 5 years to 80 per cent. of that rent. The difference goes to form the *insurance money* (abolished in 1896). (Section 8). A rather complicated Guarantee Fund is established, comprising a cash portion and a contingent portion, in which all the financial resources of Ireland are impounded. It is intended to repay to the Consolidated Fund all annuities that may remain unpaid when their term expires. Moreover a Reserve Fund of £200,000 is to be constituted (Section 4 to 6).

measure of great prudence and forethought, and one to be commended from all points of view.[10]

In this connection it is curious to note one of the causes that retarded these operations; it proves how closely linked together is the whole economic world. Dating from 1891,—it was one of the innovations in that Act—the Treasury paid the landlords their purchase-price, not in money, but in Land Stock, that is to say, in securities very similar to British Consols. For a time the landlords profited by this arrangement; the stock, like Consols, was quoted above par. But after the Transvaal War its price fell, within a few months, from 110 to 90 or 91, with the result that the landlords no longer showed any desire to sell their estates. Finally, in 1903, it was found that under the new system established in 1891 and 1896, only 38,251 tenants had been turned into proprietors; and at that same date the total number of peasant owners created from first to last had reached no higher figure than 73,917.[11] As Land Purchase was progressing more and

[10] *Land Law (Ireland) Act* (59 and 60 Vict., ch. 47.) As to the decennial reductions (Section 25) for the second and third decade, the annuity is calculated on the capital remaining due at the beginning of the decade; from the fourth onwards the annuity is calculated (until the whole sum has been repaid) on the capital remaining due at the beginning of this decade. Section 40 of the Act of 1896 introduces a principle of compulsion into the procedure of land purchase, as far as concerns estates sold by the *Landed Estates Court* (the successor of the old *Encumbered Estates Court* established in 1849), which, since 1877, has borne the name of the *Land Judge's Court.* The *Land Judge*, after the estate has been inspected and valued by the *Land Commission*, is to offer the tenants the choice of buying the land that they are occupying, at a price and on conditions fixed by him as reasonable. If three quarters of the tenants (in number and in rateable value) accept this offer, he can order that the others shall be considered to have also accepted. The *Land Commission* then advances to the purchasing tenants the sum fixed as price (the *Land Commission* always reserving the right to refuse the advance if the price appears to it to be excessive). From 1896 to 1903, 3,699 tenants availed themselves of this Section 40 of the Act. These provisions aimed at giving the tenants in possession a right of preference in case of sale before the *Land Judge.* Unfortunately the unceasing conflict between the *Land Judge* and the *Land Commission* and the requirements of the *Land Judge* as to selling price have greatly restricted the application of the Act on this point.

[11] Official statistics submitted to Parliament on March 27th, 1903. *Cf.* the *Report of the Land Commission for* 1902 to 1903—the total sum advanced up to that date amounted to £24,309,098. These figures include the advances made under Section 40 of the Act of 1896 and the advances made through the *Congested Districts Board.*

more slowly, it was felt that some new impulse must be given to the machine. This was the aim of the great Land Act of 1903. But before proceeding to study this new regime, we must pause to enquire what results, financial, economic and social, have arisen out of these experiments in land purchase, and what criticisms have been provoked by them.

II.—Results and Criticisms.

To begin with finance. Have the repayment annuities been discharged with regularity by the tenants ? To this question one can reply in the affirmative, but not without some reservations. Out of the total sum due for annuities up to November 18th, 1904, and amounting to £495,375, there remained on March 31st, 1905, some £15,532 in arrear, or 3.1 per cent. On the following July 24th these arrears had been reduced to £2,617 or 0·5 per cent. In the course of its work during 1904 and 1905, the Land Commission was compelled to sell 92 holdings owing to default in the payment of annuities, but, as regards 75 of this number, proceedings were stayed owing to the subsequent payment of arrears ; there remained in fact 17 cases of compulsory expropriation.[1] These arrears and defaults leave no cause for uneasiness as to the mass of the tenant-purchasers. Nevertheless it points to an eventual danger in the event of an agricultural crisis, or in case of a large number of peasants buying their land at excessive prices (a point to which we shall refer later on). We may add that the Treasury at all events cannot suffer. In spite of the improbability of any movement in the future analogous to the No Rent Campaign, the Treasury is perfectly secured, not merely by the value of

[1] *Land Commission Report* 1904-1905, p. 9. The number of the tenant-purchasers who were in arrear amounted to 1,897 on the 31st of March, 1905 ; and on July 24th following to 424. These figures do not include tenant-purchasers who had bought under the Act of 1903.

the land, but by the existence of a considerable Guarantee Fund. The Treasury can have recourse to the local taxation, and to those grants which it pays over to the local authorities, and from which, in case of need, it would merely have to subtract the amount of the possible losses[2] resulting from these financial operations. The credit of the United Kingdom is involved in no risk.

We go on to the economic side of the question. How does land purchase affect agriculture and the farmers? A special official enquiry[3] of the year 1903 lays it down that "the holdings of Tenant Purchasers have largely improved in all parts of Ireland as regards cultivation, treatment, and general improvement." The fertility of the soil has been increased; on one estate in County Mayo the capacity of the holdings has been added to by 50 to 100 per cent. Indebtedness, on the other hand, has decreased. The credit and the financial situation of the peasant purchasers have made notable progress; and in many places the moneylender has disappeared. "The exceptions to this rule are of such a nature as to emphasise rather than detract from the good effects of purchase" on the agricultural situation. These exceptions are usually found in cases where some misfortune has occurred in the house; or where the holding is too small and insufficient to support a family (a proof that the "dwarf" holdings should be enlarged before the tenant is allowed to buy them); or, lastly, where the tenant-purchaser started without capital, weighed down under charges too heavy for him to bear (a proof that advances, secured on the land, ought to be placed at the tenant's disposal; and that care should also be taken lest the farmer, by

2 Concerning these grants see Note to Sec. III. Chap. IV.

3 *Report* by W. F. Bailey, Legal Assistant Commissioner, *of an enquiry into the present condition of tenant-purchasers under the Land Purchase Acts* (*House of Commons, 25th March*, 1903). V. especially pp. 3 to 7 and 10 to 18. The tenants who have become owners now hesitate to borrow money: it seems to them a wrong. (*Ib.* p. 10 and 11). The tendency to sub-division of small holdings, formerly very general, disappears with the establishment of peasant proprietorship. (*Ib.* p. 8 to 10).

buying his holdings at too high a price, should create too heavy a charge on his future).

From the social point of view, the effects of the purchase system are no less favourable. Purchase has brought peace and security to the tenants. Though still poor, they are freed from an intolerable burden and are therefore happy. "If they do not live better," said an eye-witness who lives in the West, "they live less badly. Their standard of life has risen. They are more sober, more industrious, and more inclined to be hopeful." On one estate in the County of Fermanagh the consumption of alcohol has been reduced by two-thirds, according to the testimony of the parish priest. The agrarian troubles have disappeared where purchase has been carried out; "a spirit of content and interest in the improvement of their holdings has taken the place of unrest and discontent." [4]

Will these happy results of land purchase prove permanent? That is another matter. Those Cassandras of Ireland, the reactionary landlords, predict the very blackest future for the tenant purchasers: increased debts, sub-division of the land, general destruction of the woods, ruin of agriculture, in fact all the evils which traditional British prejudices used to attribute to peasant proprietorship. To sell the land to a buyer without capital, they say, is an absurdity; to sell him the land by means of annuities at a rate lower than his former rent, is a swindle, a fraud, and a piece of jugglery. Under pretence of purchase you are in reality carrying through an immense scheme of political corruption, from which will result, as from all immoral legislation, nothing but moral and material disasters.[5]

The peasants on their part are ready enough to criticise, not the principle of purchase, but the complication, the slowness and the inefficiency of the Acts that regulate it.

4 *Ib.* p. 12 to 14.

5 *Cf.* O'Connor Morris. *Present Irish Questions*, 183, 184, 238 and the following pages.

Indeed the system itself appealed to them from the very first. To be masters in their own house, what a dream of bliss! "We are as happy as a choir of angels" said one of them in their imaginative language. Unfortunately the legal delays are interminable. Offers to purchase are usually ill-received by the second Land Court employed in liquidating the encumbered estates of the landlords—I mean that old tribunal which still works on parallel lines with the Land Commission and often impedes its operations, the Court of the Land Judge (Landed Estates Court).[6] Moreover the purchase offers are only too often declined by the landlords, who refuse to sell, or else demand an excessive price—these transactions being all voluntary under the now existing law. In fact though 73,917 tenant-purchasers have been created during the last 18 years from 1885 to 1903, one may yet fairly ask: what are these, out of the 544,625 cultivators existing in Ireland (in 1903)? At this rate more than a century would elapse before the land question was solved.

Another source of complication is that 73,917 tenant-

6 *The Landed Estates Court*, called the *Land Judge's Court* since the Judicature Act of 1877; it succeeded the old *Encumbered Estates Court* founded in 1849 (see earlier in chapter). Legally speaking its purpose is by compulsory sale to liquidate bankrupt estates on the demand of the creditors; and it is empowered to take similar steps on the demand of the landlords, in the case of estates that are merely insolvent. As a matter of fact, instead of "realising" these estates, it has taken to merely administering them through a receiver, and constantly postponing their sale under pretence of legal difficulties, etc.: it has thus become a vast administrator of immovable property, an immense *rent office* with an army of agents, receivers, etc. In 1896 the number of estates under its jurisdiction was estimated at 1,500, the rent from them at £638,000, and their capital value 13 millions sterling. Some absolute orders for sale have remained unexecuted for 23 years. Some estates have remained in court for 40 years. In one case, all the parties interested had died before it was decided. During the last few years the delays have diminished but not disappeared. We may add that the Land Judge administers his estates with great severity as regards the tenants, whom he constantly threatens or punishes for contempt of court; moreover, as representing the landlord's interest he is continually trying to raise the rents as high as possible. He has never done anything to assist the tenants towards buying their holdings, and has often found himself in sharp conflict with the Land Commission as regards the administration of the laws of land purchase. Everybody calls for the suppression of the Land Judge and the fusion of this court with the Land Commission.

purchasers, scattered all over Ireland, pay annuities which usually rule lower than the rents paid by their less fortunate neighbours whose landlords have refused to sell. The latter naturally look upon this state of things as unfair. Why should others obtain relief, they say, and not we ? Why should we continue to pay rents that are too high, while these other tenants who are our neighbours, actually pay less in order to become owners of the soil ? Such inequality of treatment cannot long continue. The experiment of land purchase has succeeded : it must therefore be pushed forward to its conclusion. An end must be made of it. Voluntary sale, and the system of purchase by mutual agreement, will never achieve this ; then let them order compulsory sale, as a universal measure, for the lands that we are cultivating. We want the legal expropriation of the landlords, the end of this hybrid regime called dual ownership, and the final abolition of this curse called landlordism ![7]

A general and compulsory expropriation of the landlords is no small matter. It has been calculated that it would require an advance from the Treasury of 120 millions sterling. Doubtless one must not unduly recoil at the idea of compulsion applied to such an undertaking.[8] Compulsion is often applied to public purposes less evidently useful and vital to a nation than this ; in any case the Gladstonian legislation has done more injury to the landlords than would now result from legal expropriation. Doubtless also an analogous transaction, the purchase of seignorial rights, has been successfully negotiated in many countries, though at a time when it was easier than now, because there was less competition in the world for agricultural produce. We may remember that it was carried out by Prussia in 1850, and by Russia

[7] In the Act of 1891 an endeavour was made to lessen these inequalities by a system of insurance money, but this system did not last.

[8] See the justification of compulsory expropriation as applied to the Irish landlord, by Matthew Arnold in *Irish Essays*, p. 27.

after 1860.[9] Nevertheless one cannot deny the extreme difficulty of such an operation in Ireland, where it would be rendered harder by the sub-division of holdings and by the excessive amount of land under pasturage; and retarded by the universal complication of everything connected with the law, especially in regard to the proving of titles to property. One can hardly feel astonished that the landlords, who had always protested against purchase by friendly agreement, should have raised a loud outcry against this "piece of madness," this "shameless confiscation," called compulsory purchase. According to them it would mean driving the civilising element out of Ireland for ever, and light-heartedly provoking a No-Rent campaign, in fact a general land strike throughout the country!

However this may be, the compulsory expropriation of the landlords formed far too fine a programme of agitation not to be seized by the Irish Nationalists at the very first opportunity. This opportunity came in the year 1900, when unity was re-established within the Irish party through the influence of Mr. William O'Brien and the United Irish League. For two years from that date the land war raged throughout Ireland. The tenants, by mutual agreement, would go to their landlords and address them more or less in the following terms:—"We are paying unfair and excessive rents. There are only two alternatives left: you must either reduce our rents as low

9 The Prussian Act of 1850 organised the purchase of rents and seignorial dues at a price of from 18 to 20 times the revenue of the dues. The state created at the same time, a certain number of agrarian banks which issued shares in order to pay the purchase price to the lords. The peasants were to repay these advances in annuities of 4.5 per cent. during 56 years, or of 5 per cent. during 47 years.

In Russia (Act of 1860) the purchase price was fixed by the State at 16⅔ times the rent or due. The purchase-money was advanced by the State itself. The repayment was arranged in 49 annuities of 6 per cent. of the price of sale. A recent Ukase has definitely remitted the rights of purchase that remained due on January 1st, 1907 (about 90 million roubles).

In Bavaria a scheme of purchase was initiated in 1848 at a price representing 20 times the rent, this amount being paid off by an annuity of which the State retained one-tenth as a rent-charge.

as the annuities paid by our neighbours, the Tenant-Purchasers, or else you must sell us the land. Sale or reduction, one or the other, we must have." Simultaneously the League was carrying on a campaign against agrarian "congestion" and the excessive grazing, and was demanding a "redistribution" of the land devoted to cattle-breeding in order to restore some of it to cultivation. In Ulster, too, the "loyalist" and Presbyterian peasants rose in revolt against landlordism and claimed a general scheme of land purchase. The agitation produced its results. On the one hand, the great reactionary landlords responded by declaring war against their assailants, and founded the Land Trust in order to provide funds for the campaign. But, on the other hand, the more moderate section showed themselves favourably disposed towards the idea of conciliation. These "moderates" advocated an understanding with the peasants whereby both sides might arrive at some practical solution of the land question. They perceived that the Conservative Government, to whom probably there remained but a short lease of life, was well disposed towards the landlord interest; and being anxious to benefit by this favourable disposition, they made every endeavour to pave the way for intervention in the land deadlock, by Act of Parliament. In December, 1902, they invited representatives of the Nationalist party to a friendly "Conference," under the presidency of Lord Dunraven. They persuaded them to renounce the idea of expropriation and compulsory sale, in order to obtain from the British Parliament a gilded form of compulsion, namely, a large subsidy of money to be applied in facilitating the proposed settlement. Finally, in agreement with the tenants, they laid down the basis and the conditions of an acceptable scheme for the general purchase of the land.[10] It was this preliminary understanding

[10] For the history of this "Land Conference" V. our article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of May 15th, 1903, *l'Irlande et l'Imperialisme Britannique*, p. 241, etc. This Conference, at which the tenants were

between the parties, since known as the Dunraven Treaty, which induced the Government at length to take action. Mr. Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, prepared a Bill designed to develop and complete the business of land purchase, and this Bill became law in August, 1903. We will now set forth the principal provisions of this new and great Land Act, and give some account of the results that have followed from it.

III.—The Land Act of 1903.

It provides for the establishment of a whole system or land purchase by the farmers, land purchase based on friendly agreement, by means of which Mr. Wyndham expected to see a complete transfer of the soil of Ireland carried through and terminated, within fifteen years. Its aim is not legal expropriation, nor even indirect compulsion to sell. It is an Act of an optional nature, designed to attain its ends by persuasion, in fact one might say, by inciting the owners to sell. It offers tangible returns to landlords who sell their land, while at the same time it holds out advantages (of a somewhat illusory character, perhaps) before the eyes of the tenants who think of buying. It provides, moreover, a certain number of beneficent though inadequate measures with regard to

represented by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. T. Harrington, laid it down as a principle that in order to make land purchase general, both buyers and sellers must obtain reciprocal advantages. The purchase-price was to be calculated on the basis of second-term judicial rents or their equivalent. The landlords were to receive a sum which, invested at 3 or 3¼ per cent., would bring them in an income equal to their rents after deducting expenses of administration. The annuities to be paid by the tenants should be calculated so as to allow a reduction equivalent to from 15 to 25 per cent. on the amount of their rents; the difference between these prices should be payable by the Treasury. The system would be compulsory in so far as the advances to be made by the Treasury should be limited to agreements executed without more than 5 years delay. The report concluded by asserting the necessity of legislative provisions as regards the reinstating of unfairly evicted tenants and the enlargement of "dwarf" holdings by allotting to them lands devoted to cattle-breeding.

the "re-settling" of estates ravaged by congestion and, further, with regard to the reinstatement of tenants who had been unjustly evicted during the last twenty-five years of the land war. We may add that it is an Act passed by a government in alliance with the landlords, and that, consequently, it barely attempts to conceal, under a show of impartiality, the various adroit efforts made to favour these allies, by raising the price of land. For this reason, though undoubtedly an advance towards the solution of the land question, it runs the risk of provoking a future recrudescence of agrarian trouble in Ireland.

The Act of 1903, to summarise the matter, provides an entirely new procedure with regard to land purchase. It does not destroy the old system, but merely superimposes itself upon it. The parties, both landlords and tenants, are still allowed perfect freedom in agreeing upon the price. But these sales are no longer limited to individual tenants or holdings; they are applied, *en bloc*, to a whole estate.[1] They are, moreover, under the control and sanction of a new department, created within the body of the Land Commission, and known as the Estates Commissioners (three in number,) whose special duty it is to administer the new Act.[2] The Act facilitates their operations in several ways: firstly, by freeing them from certain duties and fees payable to the Treasury (stamp

[1] That is to say, by parcels of land which the Estates Commissioners regard as forming an estate for the purposes of the Act (Section 98, paragraph 1). One of the drawbacks of dealing by estates and not by individuals is that when selling property, the bad land is paid for at the same rate as the good land. On the other hand, by its elasticity, this arrangement leaves the Estates Commissioners free to refuse their sanction to the sale of an estate if they consider the price too high; or to insist upon re-settling in the case of those in congested districts. To prevent their sale they need only refuse to consider them as "estates" within the meaning of the Act.

[2] Section 23. One of these three was already a member of the Land Commission. As a set-off to the others, and by way of economy, two posts now occupied by Land Commissioners will remain vacant on the retirement or the decease of their past holders. The Estates Commissioners are officials whose duties are partly administrative and partly judicial in character. In their administrative capacity their actions can be discussed in Parliament; they receive instructions from "the

duties and registration duty).[3] It confers on every landlord the power of selling, even in cases of entail or of superior interests, provided that he can prove that he or his predecessors have received rent from the land for at least six years.[4] Finally it simplifies and shortens the procedure by means of a special system known as the "zones." If the parties concerned agree to work under this system they can only fix the purchase price between certain maxima and minima laid down by law and called "zones"—that is to say, the purchase price must be such that the annuity due from the tenant purchaser will represent a reduction of not less than 10 per cent. and not more than 30 per cent. on his former rent (in the case of second term rents, *i.e.*, those already fixed judicially for the second period of fifteen years). In the case of first term rents the reduction must be not less than 20 and not more than 40 per cent. on the former rent.[5] In all cases within the zones the Estates Commissioners are compelled to sanction the sale without comment (unless indeed, they refuse to regard the lands in question

Castle" (the first instructions given them by the Conservative Government were, as a matter of fact, ill calculated to promote the success of the Act). But in their judicial capacity they are independent of the Government. They have even gone so far as to annul, as exceeding his powers, certain rules of procedure laid down by the Lord Lieutenant. (V. the Downes-Martin case, January 17th, 1906). They can, and if one party to the case insists, are bound to, refer points of law to the Judicial Commissioner.

3 Sections 49 and 50.

4 Section 17. *Cf.* Sections 15, 70. The power of sale is thus enlarged and simplified, and the tenant-purchaser is at once provided with a clear title. But the allotment and distribution of the purchase-price (except the bonus, of which we shall have occasion to speak) are subject to legal proof, and all parties interested are entitled to be heard upon it (Section 24). This clearing of title is highly complicated; for the land law involves, according to English law, many sub-divisions, and, moreover, the deeds for the transfer of property are not submitted to any system of public registration. Various laws have now made such registration compulsory in Ireland for tenant-purchasers (and optional for other owners), and have set up local land registers. But these laws are far from being adequate.

5 Section 1. These limits do not apply to congested estates, nor to purchases made by the Congested Districts Board (*Cf.* below, p. 297). Nor do they apply to tenants whose rent is not judicially fixed. In all these cases the Estates Commissioners preserve their rights of inspection, enquiry, and of refusing their approval. Ac ording to

as forming an estate).[6] But supposing the agreed price is outside the zones? In that case the Commissioners remain masters of the situation, as under the former Acts. After due enquiry and inspection, they may refuse to sanction the operation.[7] Thus in order to secure greater rapidity of procedure, the parties concerned are encouraged to agree to a price within the zones. But the following point must be noted. The minimum price fixed by the zones is noticeably higher than the average prices paid for land under the former Acts. From 1885 to 1903 the average price paid by the tenants was 17½ years purchase, whereas the minimum price within the zone system under this new Act corresponds to 18½ (for first-term rents), or 21½ years purchase (for second-term rents). Here one may clearly see an attempt made by the Conservative Government to raise prices by artificial means for the benefit of the landlord.[8]

We will now pass on to the main question, that is to say, the new advantages which this Act confers on

Section 1, paragraph 1, in fine, they are authorised, according to their judgment, to treat a first-term rent as if it were a second term.

Why is there a minimum price fixed in the Zones? The framers of the Act say that it is designed, not as a protection for the tenants, but in order to safeguard interests prior to those of the landlords, creditors, etc. As regards this point, one cannot help observing that the price of land does not depend on the mortgages with which it is charged. This institution of a minimum price seems to be an indirect method of raising the purchase price.

6 Section 98, sub-sec. 1 of the Act. This is their sole means of refusing to advance money in cases where the price is so high that the land would not form a sufficient guarantee for the Treasury (this was considered to be the case by the *Estates Commissioners* and by the *Judicial Commissioner* in the case of the *Blake-Forster Estate*, 19th January and 27th July, 1905).

7 Section 1, sub-sec. 2 and Section 5. Inspection, according to the framers of the Act, greatly delays the completion of these sales. It was for this reason that they endeavoured to suppress it by means of the zones. This suppression had also another end in view. Inspection by the Land Commission kept down the purchase price, in view of the Treasury's guarantees. To suppress the inspection meant raising the price.

8 The Nationalists have never ceased demanding the abolition of the "zones," which they say, with some show of reason, have vitiated the market. Inspection, they very justly observe, is indispensable in the case of loans on land (V. *Hansard*, February 4th, 1904, Mr. MacHugh's amendment).

landlords and tenants. To begin with the case of the landlords. They obtain benefits of many kinds. They are paid in cash instead of (as has been the case since 1891) in stock which had fallen considerably below par.[9] Over and above their price of sale, the Treasury allows them, as a graceful present, a bonus or extra premium amounting to 12 per cent. on the purchase price.[10] Special facilities are offered, in the case of trustees, as regards the reinvestment of the purchase moneys.[11] Finally, under certain circumstances, they can, when selling their land, get advances on their demesne from the Land Commission (under form of purchase and re-sale).[12] We now come to the case of the tenants. Theoretically their advantages are double those of the landlords. In the first place the maximum advance of capital that can be made to them for the purchase of their land is raised from £3,000 or £5,000 sterling (according to the case in question), to £7,000.[13] This provision benefits only the big farmers of Leinster or Munster, whose cases are not the most urgent. Secondly, the repayment annuities do not, as heretofore, amount to 4 per cent. of the capital to be repaid, but only to 3¼ per cent.; they are reduced, in fact, by at least one-fifth.[14] Let us enquire what this means. In criticising an annuity there are two elements to be considered, the amount of the annuity and its duration. In this case the amount of the annuity is less than heretofore. But how long must its payment continue? Formerly the tenant-purchaser had the choice of either paying it off in

9 Section 27.

10 Section 48. It is paid to the landlord in person and not to the creditors or holders of prior claims. When, however, the estate is so heavily encumbered that the landlord will receive none of the purchase price, the bonus follows the purchase price and is distributed with it. There is no bonus in the case of compulsory sales. (*Cf.* the Act of 1904, which reasserted the intention of the framers of the 1903 Act; the latter had been misinterpreted by the Law Courts, as regards the bonus).

11 Sections 51 and 52.

12 Section 3, Sections 11 and 24.

13 Section 1, sub-sec. 4.

14 Section 45. The interest remains at 2¾ per cent But the sinking fund portion is reduced from 1¼ to ½ per cent.

49 fixed annuities or in 70 annuities with reductions every ten years. The latter system was exceedingly prudent and advantageous. Now, however, he is no longer given any choice. He must pay the fixed annuity without any decennial reductions, and pay it, not for forty-nine years only, but for sixty-eight and a half. Now, as heretofore, he must sooner or later repay to the Treasury in annuities the full amount of capital that it advanced to him. I do not, therefore, see that the advantage claimed, that is to say, the reduction in the amount of the annuity, can, in the face of the prolongation of the term, be called a real advantage. The tenant gains nothing by the new system. I might even go so far as to say that he loses, or, at all events, runs the risk of losing,—for the following reason : Seeing that the amount of the annuity is less than formerly, the tenant-purchaser finds that by the same purchase price he will get a greater reduction of his annual payment. This greater reduction acts as a temptation. He forgets that this very reduction means paying a far higher capital sum in the end, under this new Act, than it would have meant under former Acts ; and that he will now commit himself to paying a far bigger price to the landlord for his land than he would formerly have cared to risk. This is not merely a supposition. I am stating what has actually taken place, and describing how the tenants have allowed themselves to be deceived by a system which is doubtless very ingenious, but also very dangerous.

At this point it will be well to notice some of the accessory provisions of the Act. One of them, as a measure of peace, aims at wiping out the past by reinstating the tenants who have been unjustly evicted during the long Land War since 1879. The Estates Commissioners can advance to these evicted tenants (or their living representatives) such sums as may be necessary for buying back their former holdings, or for acquiring untenanted land on other estates sold under the Act. It is a regrettable fact that this provision has as yet been

applied in only a few cases.[15] Another important point: The Estates Commissioners can buy estates on application by the landlords, and under certain specified conditions, with a view to re-sale to the tenants.[16] They are more especially empowered to buy estates considered to be congested under the somewhat narrow definition of the Act.[17] They can buy untenanted land in order to re-settle and enlarge the holdings on those estates.[18]

They can execute all requisite improvements on the estates before reselling them, and can obtain from the

[15] Section 2. (Similar advances may be made to tenants in possession on estates that have been sold, so as to enable them to buy unoccupied land with which to enlarge their "dwarf" holdings). On March 31st, 1906, 5,287 applications for reinstatement had been received; out of this number 284 tenants had been reinstated by their former landlords, and 103 restored to possession and provided with fresh holdings by the *Estates Commissioners* (*Report of the Estates Commissioners for* 1903 *to* 1906). We may add that quite recently, on February 14th, 1907, Mr. Birrell, Chief Secretary for Ireland, laid before the House of Commons some later figures which mark a certain development of these operations. Out of 6,680 applications for reinstatement received up to date (from which must be deducted 1,347 as unqualified) there had been 465 reinstatements carried out by the landlords with the financial assistance of the *Estates Commissioners*, and 179 tenants installed on lands bought by the Estates Commissioners. Mr. Birrell, moreover, gave a formal assurance that the Act as relating to the evicted tenants should receive prompt and full application.

[16] Section 6. Three-quarters of the tenants must undertake to buy their holdings. (The Lord Lieutenant may, under special circumstances, annul this condition). On March 31st, 1906, only 58 estates had been bought by the *Estates Commissioners* at a total price of £1,419,923. As a rule the landlords prefer to come to a direct understanding with the tenants, from whom they hope to obtain a higher price. The maximum value of lands permitted to be vested in the Land Commission is 5 millions sterling (Section 9).

[17] Section 6, sub-secs. 4 and 5. The special condition above mentioned does not apply to the case of a congested estate, but the Lord Lieutenant must intervene in order to certify the necessity of the operation. A congested estate, according to the Act, is an estate of which half (in superficies) consists of holdings of less than £5 rateable value, or of mountain or bog-land, or of which not less than a quarter is held in rundale or intermixed plots (rundale meaning, held in common with rotation). This definition sets too narrow limits to the term *congested*. Out of 200,000 uneconomic holdings, that is, holdings insufficient to support a family, this definition would only include 50,000. Section 9, sub-section 2, lays down a special maximum as regards the price to be paid for congested estates. The amount paid in one year is not to exceed by more than one-tenth the price probably obtainable on resale.

[18] Section 8.

reserve fund the advances necessary for this purpose.[19] All this is excellent ; but here too the practical results do not correspond to the hopes that were formed.[20]

One last word about this Act. Who pays for it ? The Treasury pledges its credit, as in the case of former Acts. It issues guaranteed land stock at the rate of 5 million sterling a year, bearing interest of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. and secured, as regards both its redemption and its interest, on the annuities payable by the tenant-purchasers.[21] There remain two chief series of expenses to be provided for ; the loss resulting on the issue of stock below par,[22] and the bonus of 12 per cent. to be paid to the landlords. To meet these extra expenses a surplus is required, over and above the loan. The first mentioned of these headings of expenditure is secured on a special Irish fund,[23] and the second is charged on the imperial budget ; but England will not lose on the transaction, for the government undertook to effect, and is already effecting, reductions and expenses to an equivalent amount. It is Ireland then that, finally speaking, will pay the expenses involved

[19] Sections 12 and 43. As regards the Reserve Fund (see earlier in this chapter). The funds advanced are repaid by the tenant purchasers, together with the purchase-price of their holding. In this matter the Estates Commissioners enjoy the same compulsory rights as the Congested Districts Board.

[20] On March 31st, 1906, the Estates Commissioners had so far only bought one congested estate. They had bought only 9,181 acres of untenanted land. They had spent only £13,994 in improvements before resale. (V. the Report of the Estates Commissioners for 1903-1906).

[21] Sections 28, etc. The Guarantee Fund formed in 1891 is reinforced from several Irish sources, notably from the new proportional subsidy paid to Ireland from the Treasury since 1902, and called the *Irish Development Fund* (a proportional subsidy equivalent to the annual amount voted for England by the Education Act of 1902 for educational purposes). The Guarantee Fund is thus raised to 150 millions sterling : in fact the security of the lender is complete (V. Section 40). At the time when the Act was being drawn up an idea had been started of entrusting to Irish authorities the recovery of land-purchase annuities, the Exchequer retaining, as a set-off, an equal amount of the annual subsidies due to Ireland. This would have been a beginning of financial Home Rule. The idea was not put into practice ; but some day it will, perhaps, reappear.

[22] Their average price of issue up to 1908 was 89.

[23] The Irish Development Fund.

in carrying through the transfer of the land, including even the graceful supplementary present that England has thought right to offer to the landlords. England does not lose a farthing. She debits to the account of the Sister Isle all the expenses of dismissing the landlords.

IV.—The Results of the Act of 1903.

Judged merely by appearances, the Act of 1903 would seem to have achieved a truly remarkable success. From the very first, purchase agreements and applications for advances have flowed in. From November 1st, 1903 (the date when the Act came into force) to March 31st, 1906, the number of agreements for the direct transfer of the land from landlord to tenant, reached no less a figure than 85,638.[1] At this rate all the land in Ireland would be bought within ten years. It is impossible not to recognise the magnitude of this great step towards the general transference of the soil, and the creation of peasant-proprietorship in Ireland. If then, one merely considered the area transferred, one might say that the Act of 1903 has been a complete success. But we must examine the conditions under which this transfer is carried out.

In the first place, however great the number of purchase-agreements concluded and laid on the table of the Estates Commissioners, the latter can only sanction them, and consequently advance the money, at a very slow rate. Their staff is not equal to the work—the Treasury cuts down their grants to the narrowest limits—and we may add more especially, their funds are not sufficient to make the advances (as the Exchequer only issues stock to the amount of 5 millions a year). On March 31st, 1906, they

1 *Report of the Estates Commissioners for the period* 1903-1906. Add 1,213 purchase agreements concerning parcels of land for evicted tenants, or to enlarge holdings, 29 applications for advances on demesnes for the benefit of the landlord, and 18 agreements of various kinds. General total, 86,898 agreements. The advances applied for amount in all to £32,692,066.

had only been able to examine half the purchase agreements submitted to them.[2] Hence, and not without justification, there arise complaints and recriminations from both landlords and tenants alike.

With regard to the future, however, the following considerations will prove more serious. The Act offers means of remedying the agrarian evils of Ireland, namely, the excessive sub-division of holdings and congestion. Under this heading, as we have already remarked, it has so far produced but little result. In practice the buying and selling operations are almost always carried out by direct bargains between landlord and tenant. The Commissioners themselves make few purchases: they only re-settle and improve a very small number of congested estates; in fact they seem hardly to make any attempt at effective opposition to the immediate sale without preliminary re-settlement of these congested estates, although the Act would seem to have provided them with an indirect means of doing so.[3] Apparently, then, the organic disease of Irish land, namely, congestion, is not being adequately treated. Indeed it is to be feared that the Act may merely perpetuate, or stereotype, as has been said, the constitutional evil which, under the new regime of peasant ownership,[4] will soon be more dangerous than ever.

[2] 34,804 out of 86,898 (the same report). We may add that the Liberal Government that came in at the end of 1905 seems anxious to afford the Estates Commissioners every facility for their work.

[3] They could refuse to recognise the lands in question as an estate.

[4] The check which, in practice, has suspended those Provisions of the Act dealing with congestion and the evicted tenants was partly due to the "instructions" given to the *Estates Commissioners* by the "Castle," in 1904-1905, under the Conservative Government; they have restricted and prevented the results aimed at by the framers of the bill. V. the Commissioners' own words on this question, in their report for 1903-1906. V. also the severe comments of Lord Dunraven (a Unionist) in the *Fortnightly Review* of November, 1905 (p. 790 to 793). The Liberal Government on coming into power substituted new instructions for those of the Tories. We may hope that it will prove determined enough to overcome the difficulties which the *Estates Commissioners* still encounter in the text of the Act, in the parsimony of the British Treasury, and indeed in the ill-will of a certain number of the Irish landlords.

We now come to the last point. The purchase prices agreed to by the tenant-buyers are, as a general rule, extremely high, and the resulting charge upon Irish agriculture will prove not only very heavy but even dangerous. Hardly had the Act of 1903 been passed when the farmers, so far from imitating the reserve of the landlords, began to press onward and push forward their applications with such haste as to cause a considerable proportionate rise in the price of land. Politicians and Nationalist newspapers made every endeavour to restrain the peasants, and prevent them from laying too heavy a burden on their future. "Why," asked even the more moderate men, "should the price of land rise? Its price ought to fall, owing to the new advantages offered to the landlords. At all events let us keep to the average under the former Acts, say seventeen and a half years purchase for first term, and twenty-two for second term rents—(which works out to the same amount)." The moderate men, however, were soon passed by in the Nationalist councils. During the retaliatory movement which ensued against the excessive demands of the landlords—some of whom were demanding 25, 30, or even up to 40 years purchase—it was a more advanced section that took the lead.[5] "Let us accept the same average as formerly" they said. "But what is that average?" "It used to be seventeen and a half years purchase for first term rents, that is to say, for the fair rents of those days. To-day it is seventeen and a half times the existing 'fair rent'—namely, the second term rent; therefore, for the first term rents this would make it 20 per cent. less, or say 14 years purchase. Even at that price the landlords will do well, for their estates are so encumbered with mortgages as to absorb the bulk of their income; whereas once these debts are liquidated they will be able to extricate themselves with a profit in hand!" But whether moderate or advanced, these counsels were scarcely

5 Messrs. Dillon and Davitt, etc., supported by the *Freeman's Journal*. The moderates were led by Mr. William O'Brien.

listened to by the peasants, blinded by desire to own the land. Indeed, from November 1st, 1903 to March 31st, 1906, the average price of land bought and sold was 22.9 times its rent (22·9 years purchase), or 25 times, if one takes into account the supplementary bonus paid to the landlords. This represents an increase of nearly 40 per cent. on the former prices.[6]

Now it is evident that these high prices will be a heavy mortgage on future generations. The annuities are undoubtedly calculated at a reduced rate, but they will have to be paid for sixty-eight and a half years without remission or reduction. Can we suppose that, between the present moment and that far-off date, the price of agricultural produce will not become lower, owing to increased competition ? Can one hope that between now and then no crisis will occur in agriculture or in cattle-breeding ? [7] Yet any such crisis will be ruinous, not only for the tenant purchasers, whose initial expenses are too heavy, but also for the Irish ratepayers, who guarantee the payment of the annuities, and in fact for all Ireland, which is responsible for this debt as the price of her land.

With future dangers the Act of 1903 is undoubtedly pregnant. But admitting this point, can it nevertheless be considered certain of achieving its aim ? Will it effect the general and final transfer of land from landlord to tenant ? It is very doubtful. Even after this Act has done its work there will remain a considerable number of

6 *Report of the Estates Commissioners for* 1903-1906. The average price per acre during the five years preceding the Act of 1903 was £8 9s. (in stock). It rose to £13 4s. (or £15 with the bonus) under the Act of 1903. The average reduction obtained by the tenant-purchasers worked out at 25 per cent. There was also another reason that might contribute to explain this rise in prices. Landlords who had sold their estates under the former Acts, had often done so under constraint, owing to their embarrassments. But now it is no longer the most encumbered estates that are being sold. Those who are selling are not compelled to do so, and will only sell at a good price. We said, in fact, that the Act was conceived with the idea of raising purchase prices. The Tories have attained their end, but it remains to be seen whether this will not produce a greater danger in the future.

7 See above our remarks as to the crisis which is already threatening the cattle-breeding industry.

landlords who will refuse to sell at any price, and a still larger number who will refuse to sell at any reasonable price. The truth is that the bonus is not large enough to fill the gap between capital bringing in the required income at 3 per cent—which is what the landlords want—and the purchase price that would only do so at 5 per cent., which is all that the peasants can pay. To end the deadlock it will be necessary some day to resort to compulsory purchase; this seems extremely probable. The settlement of the matter will doubtless be more or less delayed and by this temporising policy some disorder and violence may, perhaps, be provoked. But from the ultimate necessity there will be no escape. Landlordism will not be abolished without recourse to legal compulsion.

However this may be, the day cannot now be far off when landlordism will have disappeared and peasant-proprietorship will be definitely established in Ireland. But will the dawning of that day necessarily mean the ending of the difficulty? Not even then will it be ended. England, though the traditional enemy of peasant proprietorship, has yet been compelled by a remarkable course of events to establish it in Ireland; to create, in fact, this very system in which, hitherto, she had only been able to perceive disadvantages both real and imaginary—although indeed it is now said that she is beginning to think of partially introducing it into England, as a means of checking her own rural depopulation. In Ireland it is undoubtedly indispensable to an agricultural revival; but is it, alone, sufficient for this purpose? Undoubtedly not. To establish peasant-proprietorship by law is not enough; it must be made workable; and, in the face of present-day cut-throat competition, this result is harder than ever to achieve, more especially when it has to pay a ransom out of the profits it earns. It is not enough to make the peasant a proprietor; he must be placed, by means of agricultural education and co-operation, in a position to succeed. This process, as a matter of fact, has already been begun in Ireland. He

must be protected against himself ; against running into debt and against sub-division of his land ; and steps have been taken in this direction by the Act of 1903. But until a remedy has been found for congestion, and for the excessive preponderance of grazing land over that devoted to tillage, one may say that nothing at all has been accomplished. And I cannot see that the Act, as applied, makes sufficient provision for these difficulties. Until cheap transit to the great centres, and advances of capital at a low rate of interest secured on real property have been supplied to the farmer, nothing has been done.[8] Up to the present moment these points have been neglected. Finally, as we have before remarked, there will be no solution of the land problem while there is no industry to give employment in Ireland. Let us hasten to add, however, that when all is said, nothing could be more fortunate for Ireland than the establishment of small peasant proprietorship. It will bring to the peasant, who has never before known it, that feeling which is the true secret of success, namely, security of tenure. It will turn him into a Conservative, as indeed he would long ago have been if only he had had anything to conserve.[9] It

8 The organisation of loans on landed security is one of the first needs of the farming interest in Ireland. It will never be satisfactorily supplied until the question of the registration of titles has been put in order, as regards both the past and the future. As to the question of the high cost of transit, see below. Another pressing need is the following :—" commons " must be re-established for the peasants ; re-afforestation and the preservation of the existing woods must be provided for (the actual lack of trees is nothing less than a calamity). Provision must also be made for public necessities in various districts, such as irrigation, drainage, roads and railways to open up untapped areas, and utilisation of peat-bogs. There being no communal authorities (the Commune does not exist in Ireland) these functions ought to be handed over to the County Councils (the creation of Trustees under the Act of 1903, Sections 4 and 20, is entirely insufficient).

9 Tacked on to the agrarian problem are two other questions of secondary interest for us Frenchmen : the question of labourers' cottages, and the question of town tenants.

Agricultural labourers who are neither owners nor cultivators are common enough in Ireland. The exact number is undiscoverable because statistics make no difference between them and the tenants, whose farms being too small to pay, supplement their profits by hiring themselves as labourers. The ultra-miserable condition of these agricultural labourers without hearth or home, and, more especially,

will allow agriculture to develop, open the way for economic progress, and, perhaps, at length bring peace to the Land of Ireland.

the frightfully insanitary condition of the hovels in which they are lodged by their employers, have, on several occasions, provoked legislative intervention. From 1883 to 1903 various Acts have empowered the *Boards of Guardians* (now the District Councils) to erect suitable buildings for the accommodation of agricultural labourers. About 20,000 cottages have now been built, almost all of them in Munster or Leinster. They are let to the labourers at an average rent of 10d. to 1s. per week. According to Irish opinion, the results obtained are very inadequate as compared with what remains to be done. The intricacy of the law and the ill-will of the landlords prevent any thorough development of the system.

The town tenants, on the other hand, are persons who have rented houses on town estates belonging to landlords (in England and Ireland, of course, the ownership of towns and villages, like that of the land in rural districts usually belongs to great landlords; hence the difficulty of erecting new buildings, and the power in the hands of the landlords of raising their rents to an excessive degree). The town tenants are asking for legislation analogous to the Gladstonian legislation, in order to protect them against the landlords; also for a better means of defending their rights to improvements of immovable property, and for the fixing of a "fair rent." The connection will be evident between the Town Tenants' question and that of the housing of the poor in the towns.

Two recent Acts (1906) have, to a certain extent, satisfied the claims of the agricultural labourers and the town tenants.

CHAPTER III.—THE WESTERN PROBLEM

THE Western problem is merely a special "case" of the land question; but it is so exceptional a case, so grave in its urgency and so interesting as a social study, that it must be given a separate place in our examination.

Killarney and its lakes, Kenmare and its river, Glengarriff and its sweet-smelling woods—who is there that does not feel their magic? Who is there but has read a hundred times of those beautiful green oases which Nature, in some stray flight of her fancy, has reserved for this *Ultima Thule* of Ireland? Privileged ground it is, and a mysterious kingdom of plants. One can hardly imagine in our climates such an exuberance of vegetable life; giant rhododendrons forming unbreachable, crenelated bastions, hollies and fuchsias thirty feet high, azaleas and yuccas, flowering laurels, impenetrable tangles of every sort of evergreen, above which stand out the red pine-trunks, the slim birch trees, and the grave splendour of the Irish yews. All this springs from a thick black soil on which the rich refuse of the forest has been heaping itself, for no one knows how many centuries; fat with the decay of past, and big with the promise of future flowerings. It is a kingdom apart, a dreamland; a section, one might almost say, of the tropical regions transplanted and set down under the pale northern sky; a little world where Nature, in our colder latitudes, seems to have tried, as if in a hot-house, to put forth all her strength and luxuriance. But is this in real truth the West of Ireland? Unfortunately not. This is what is shown to the tourist. Why do they not show him the rugged Highlands which are Ireland's fortification against

the Atlantic, the mountainous desert of Connaught, of Donegal or of Kerry, which lies along the frontiers of the great ocean, the last lands-end of Europe ? Side by side with the Ireland which is shown, one must see this Ireland which is not shown. One must travel along its roads and visit its inhabitants in order to understand all its desolation and sadness ; in order to conceive the misery of this land, and of the men who dwell upon it.

A desert of rocks and bogs ; grey rocks turned yellow by a kind of vegetable leprosy ; bogs or black marshes half shrouded in fog, stretching out of sight in the dips of immense and unvarying plateaux. No drainage system, no boundary lines ; only the slow, uncertain waters sliding sluggishly along a country that offers them no outlet. All around one, at every step, streams trickle by, heavy with earth, gnawing, reddening, and rotting everything they touch. Similarly there is no road system ; the ways wind at haphazard over deserted plateaux, regardless alike of either goal or direction. Some of them run perfectly straight and lead nowhere. These are the roads made at the time of the Great Famine as part of the relief works. There are no trees ; indeed some of the peasants can no longer remember the shape of a tree. Bog on all sides, where the soil is level ; red or black bog according to its state of decomposition. The people cut it up in long lines, straight and parallel, one above the other, and hollowed out in stages running deeper and deeper into the ground. By means of these trenches they can extract the little squares of turf which are then taken and laid out to dry in the daylight,—for one cannot say in the sun !—whereupon each of the holes fills instantly with black water which oozes out of the soil as from an over-soaked sponge. Sometimes the mountain-ridges curve in towards one another, enclosing, perhaps, a picturesque valley or else some great amphitheatre which suggests an extinct crater full of half-consumed matter. Occasionally from the top of a hill one sees a white line stretching far across the horizon. It is the Atlantic, a

desert of sea without sail or smoke. Then the landscape fades back into its grey monotony, to redden again by times in a fierce and demoniac flame that strikes along the heather, as if the land were just emerging from a furnace.

There are few houses and few villages ; and there is no one to be seen on the roads. This solitude is peopled only with ruins ; ruins of those ancient monasteries of the seventh or eighth centuries, such as Lismore or Clonmacnoise, to which all Europe once came to learn lessons of wisdom : ruins of abbeys of the middle ages, or of castles once inhabited by the old Anglo-Norman families : modern ruins of cottages which were but lately happy homes. The ruins seem more living than the living inhabitants of this ancient country. It is a land worn out and half-dead, in which nothing seems strong enough to remain erect, not even for instance this old bulging wall which is crumbling away with damp, or that old bridge which is stooping beneath its burden of years. There is but one glimmer of comfort : the chapels—the little churches that stand at long intervals near the roadside, and whose white walls, rising up from some convenient height, and seen from afar, focus the view and give some slight touch of life to this landscape of death . . . . .

I.—The Situation.

It is not nature alone which in these districts has made the problem of life so hard ; it is also human law, and the social regime. The first point that strikes one throughout the West of Ireland, is the twofold characteristic of a general depopulation combined here and there with a sporadic overpopulation. Wherever the soil permits of it, there you may see vast grazing lands, empty and bare, carved out into quadrilaterals and enclosed within great dry walls through whose interstices the daylight penetrates as through a piece of lace-work. Nowhere is there a living person or a house to be seen.

Small black Kerry cows, and Roscommon sheep,—these are the sole inhabitants of this deserted prairie. But then, pass on from the beaten track to the waste lands by the coast or to the rocky parts of the mountain or to the peat bogs on the plain. Here at long intervals you will see masses of hovels glued tightly against each other, very low and, as it were, half sunk into the ground, with thatched roofs of a rounded shape like the outline of an over-turned boat. From a distance one would say that they were merely rocks covered with bushes, a heap of molehills shaped in alternate hollows and hillocks which stand out in grey relief against the brown back-ground of the horizon. Some of them are mere huts built with dried mud. Even to-day there are still twenty thousand of these mud cabins in Ireland. Many of the cottages are abandoned. Is this due to voluntary emigration or to eviction? One cannot tell. The roof has fallen in; only the two side walls remain standing face to face like two large pentagons of stone pointing skywards. They might be taken for so many burnt or ruined chapels. It is here that the peasants are penned together, miserable and unoccupied, possessing nothing of their own, as one of them said to us "except the good God, the rain from the sky, and the light of day."

Thus, on the one hand, we find bare and deserted *latifundia*; on the other hand, here and there we find human beings herded into what might be called rural slums piled together on waste lands. This is what is known throughout Ireland, in a strangely ironical phrase, as a "congested district." In those places where there is land fit for cultivation there are no inhabitants; in those places where there are inhabitants, there is no land or not enough land. Between man and the land all true balance has been destroyed by the existing artificial state of things; they have been, so to speak, divorced from one another by law. And now they remain there within sight of each other, the land idle and the man unemployed.

The next problem is how to explain this agrarian and

social paradox, of which some sporadic examples exist here and there in every part of Ireland, but which in the West constitutes the normal and habitual condition of affairs.[1] We must consult the past. Just as Ulster has been called the "Scotland of Ireland," so Connaught might be named the "Ireland of Ireland," for it has always been the historic place of refuge for the Celts when they were driven back by the Saxon invader, and for the Catholics fleeing before Cromwell's celebrated proscription: "To Hell or Connaught." Its agrarian evolution has followed the same course as that in other parts of the country, but it has been more deeply marked and more tragic. Only sixty years ago this western Ireland was overflowing with inhabitants. For want of industries every family lived on the produce of the land, and the land had gradually become more and more sub-divided. The peasants asked nothing of it but that it should give them their one unvarying food—the potato; until the day came when the soil, worn out by this constant demand, finally ceased working for them and ended by producing nothing at all. Nowhere in Ireland were the two curses of the country, excessive sub-division of land and over-population, more acutely felt; and in no part of the country did the Great Famine strike down the people so cruelly. Peel thought he had found a remedy for it in permitting the free importation of corn. But the remedy proved worse than the disease. "This means the ruin of agriculture!" cried the landlords, and proceeded at once to that wholesale and monstrous operation known as the Clearances; that is to say, to a campaign of evictions *en masse*, which, judged by the results that still remain, constituted, I think, the greatest legalised crime that humanity has ever accomplished against humanity. They destroyed these populated mole-hills, in order to convert into pasture land—into poor pasture land—that meagre

[1] An analogous state of things exists in the Western Highlands of Scotland; but the Scotch crofters do not amount to 15,000 in number, whereas the inhabitants of the Irish congested districts are at least eight times as numerous, counting the heads of families alone.

soil of the West, just as they have elsewhere converted better land into the rich ranches of Leinster and Munster. Western Ireland was turned into one vast cattle-ranch. Would it not be truth to say, in the phrase of old Sir Thomas More, that in this deserted country "the beasts have eaten up the men"?

What was to become of these men, women, and children whose sustenance was considered too costly by the owners of the soil? They emigrated. Those who could do so left the country. Since 1841, Connaught has lost 54 per cent. of its population. As for those who remained, they were obliged to huddle themselves miserably together on insufficient fragments of the worst land; on those portions that the cattle refused! And to this day, though greatly reduced in numbers, there are still in the West of Ireland,—in Connaught, Kerry and Donegal,—more than half a million inhabitants who are unable to make a living on the remnants of land left to them since the Clearances. But from their place of exile they sometimes look down the valley and see the fields from which their fathers were driven, and the ruined hearth-stone, still black with smoke, of the house in which they were born. Is it a Paradise Lost, or is it the Land of Promise? Who can tell?

A few figures will help to define more exactly the existing state of things. In the Union of Westport, in County Mayo, cattle-raising occupies 150,935 acres of land, and there remain only 15,000 acres for cultivation by 5,488 families of peasants.[2] Taking County Mayo as a whole, for 36,000 families engaged in agriculture, there are only 93,680 acres of agricultural land, out of 1,322,132, or about 7 per cent. The proportion is only 6.1 per cent. in the Union of Oughterard, and falls as low as 5.3 per cent. in that of Clifden (County Galway).[3] Again, to take as the minimum figure of what the English call

2 *The Problem of the West* (Report of the Special Committee of Westport District Council), Dublin, 1902, p. 4, etc.

3 *Census of Ireland*, 1901. *General Report*, p. 169 and 373. *Agricultural Statistics*, 1903, p. 33.

"subsistence allowance" a rateable valuation (per farm or family) of £10. In the Union of Westport, out of 5,488 ratepayers, 4,844 are rated below this figure. In the Union of Castlebar, 3,760 out of 4,383; in that of Ballinrobe, 2,776 out of 3,849; in that of Swinford, 2,746 out of 7,700; in that of Cahirciveen, 2,323 out of 2,838. In the counties of Donegal and Mayo half the holdings are rated at less than £4; and the same figure holds good for three-quarters of the holdings in the Unions of Oughterard and Belmullet.[4] To these considerations we must add the following feature: There are no rich men in the Congested Districts; there is no one to help or to maintain the unfortunate. Beyond a few officials, school-masters and constables, the village shop-keepers, and the clergy, who live the life of the people, there is no one to be seen except the poor and the destitute. On every hand one finds misery.

II.—Life in the West.

Let us pay a visit to one of these village "colonies," that lie isolated and lost in a desert of cattle-raising country. A new-looking church, a school with its black sign-board, "National School," are the only two buildings that seem able to stand erect among some fifty houses, or hovels. The latter are all built on one pattern: namely, a rectangle of low whitewashed walls whose surface is streaked with mildew. The roof is composed of long plaits of straw fixed across the roof-beam from one wall to the other, and fastened to each other, at given lengths, by horizontal strands. Wherever it is possible, the hovel is built on a rock in order to obtain a ready-made floor, or leant against a rock which, for the sake of economy, is used as one of its walls. Before the low door lies the

4 *Census*, 1901. *General Report*, pp. 269, 341, 345, 355. In the whole province of Connaught there are 109,359 holdings, of which 83,290 are below £10 (*Ib.* p. 185).

inevitable pool of liquid manure, a permanent breeding-ground of infection. Within the cottage it is almost too dark to see anything, in spite of the turf-fire. On one side is a recess which is used as a bedroom ; on the other, shut off by a railing-work of planks, a cow chewing the cud or a black pig grunting. There are better cabins than this in Ireland, but there are also worse. There is, for instance, the hovel consisting of one room only, without window or chimney, such as one sees in Connemara or the islands. In a certain parish in Roscommon the curate told us that, out of 1,100 houses, there are 900 in which the cattle live under the same roof as their owners.

Near the hovel lies the scrap of land, consisting of several plots inextricably mixed up with those of the neighbours. What miserable poverty seems to live in these wretched little squares of black earth, swollen with water, and, as it were, half decomposed, but yet surrounded with a rampart of stones ! In order to fight against the water, trenches about a yard deep are dug, between which the earth is piled in "lazy beds"—ridges shaped like an ass's back, and laid out as if to dry in the sun. We need scarcely say that there is no room for methodical cultivation : famine would swoop down upon the cultivator before he was half-way through with it. The soil is dug by spade work. For manure, on farms which are not too far from the coast, there is seaweed. It is obvious that this land cannot support a man. If, according to economists, we define rent as that portion of land-produce which remains as surplus after the fair profit of the cultivator, it is evident that this soil produces no rent. Nevertheless, owing to competition, the landlord succeeds in getting rents varying from 5s. to £1 an acre ; in fact, often higher rents in the bogs of Connaught than in the best lands of Ulster, and this without counting the dues for turf-digging, for pasturing cattle on neighbouring grazing lands, and the like.[1] Land laws are powerless in

1 On the coast a due is paid to the landlord for the right of harvesting seaweed for manure.

these cases. Great complicated machines such as they are, cannot be brought down to the measure of the small western cottier: in fact they have hardly touched his case.[2] For, after all, what advantage can he derive by becoming owner, or even by having his rent judicially fixed, seeing that, as he well knows, he will never be able to make a living off his "dwarf" holding? His holding is not big enough to provide a living for him. Rent, in his case, is, in reality, hire for a dwelling place, not for a farm.

How do these "congests" manage to live? In good years, when there is a fair supply of potatoes, they succeed in making ends meet, miserably though it may be. The potato is even nowadays the chief staple of their food. When the supply is exhausted, they fall back on stirabout or rather maize-porridge. Another article of consumption is tea, which they make into a kind of decoction, as indeed do the English peasantry, by boiling it for hours; made in this way, it becomes an active stimulant, but also, so medical men say, a brain poison of the most dangerous kind. To this custom some persons trace the alarming progress of insanity in the Irish country districts. About fifteen years ago, an enquiry was organised and official tables of expenditure were drawn up, relating to a certain number of peasant families (averaging five persons). Of these, the instance which showed the highest expenditure gave the family receipts as £41, and the expenses as £42.15. That which gave the lowest showed receipts totalling £8 3s., namely: by sale of eggs, £1 3s.; wages for sixty days labour, £3; herding cattle, £4. The expenditure amounted to £11 9s., namely: rent, £1; rates and taxes, 2s.; food, £5 17s.; clothing, 10s.; groceries, £4. Another account shows receipts of £9 16s., of which £4 16s. was for sale of calves, pigs and sheep,

[2] Out of 109,359 holdings in the province of Connaught, judicial rents for the second statutory period had only been fixed on 21,401 holdings, up to March 31st, 1904; or on about one-fifth of the total number. At the same date only 14,854 holdings had been bought (*Land Commission Report*, 1903-4).

£3 for sale of fish, and £2 for sale of eggs. Expenditure, £10 19s. ; of which £1 10s. was for rent, 2s. for rates and taxes, £4 for food, £3 for clothing, £1 6s. for tobacco, and £1 1s. for various requirements.[3]

The land is too poor and too much sub-divided to provide them with proper means of subsistence. Some of them live by fishing ; others hire themselves as labourers when they can find work ; but these are more or less insignificant sources of revenue. It might then very naturally be asked : From where do they succeed in drawing their surplus income ? In the first place—from America. It is a fine trait in his character that the Irish emigrant never forgets those whom he has left in the old country ; and that girls and boys alike—God alone knows the struggles through which they pass—in their exile will voluntarily undergo the heaviest privations for the sake of supporting their old parents at home. There is hardly a family in the West of Ireland that does not receive regular remittances from America, and it is not uncommon to find cases of their being sent, within a year, as much as a hundred dollars from, say, two girls who have found places in New York or Boston. The following are some verified statistics. Every year the Union of Clifden receives, through the Clifden Bank, over £10,000 sterling in money from America, in fact over half the amount due for rents from the 3,300 families in the district ;[4] so that throughout the West of Ireland the landlords' rents are often merely a tax levied on the filial piety of child emigrants from the peasant families ! Another source of income is found in the wages of those who go to seek work in Scotland or England ; those who over there are called the migratory labourers. It is no new phenomenon, this annual migration of labour ; indeed its dangers were already noted by the Protestant Bishop

3 *First Annual Report of the Congested Districts Board of Ireland.* Dublin, 1893, p. 32, etc.

4 *Royal Commission of Inquiry on the Land Acts and Land Purchase Acts* (Fry Commission), Dublin, 1898, Vol. II., p. 866, evidence of Canon Lynskey, Parish Priest of Clifden.

Berkeley, in his *Querist*, written in 1735. At the end of the 18th century one might see, during certain periods of the year, as Lecky tells us, the roads covered with gangs of half-naked peasants, tramping 200 miles to work at the English harvests, under the management of agents, "spalpeen brokers," who pocketed the greater part of their wages, and worked them as few West Indian planters would have worked their negroes.

In 1841 the number of these migratory labourers was returned as 57,651. At the present day, owing to the decrease of population, official statistics estimate their number at only about 25,000.[5] Three-quarters of them come from Connaught; half of them from the County of Mayo alone, amounting, in fact, to over one-third of the adult male inhabitants of the county. In the Union of Swinford they amount to over half the adult male population. It is a well-known fact that throughout the summer there is not an able-bodied man under sixty years of age to be found in the island of Achill. One western peasant, for instance, is now actually in the course of his thirty-seventh season spent in England. In another place a girl who has gone every summer for ten years to Lancashire has not yet learnt a word of English there! During six months they live for nothing. One day an honest Scotch farmer saw an Irish lad in his employment fall to the ground through weakness; this boy had had hardly anything to eat for two days, all his earnings having been sent straight home to his old parents in Ireland.[6] Out of their wages of from 14 to 30 shillings

[5] *Report on Irish Migratory Labourers*, 1906, p. 7 (V. this annual report). The statistics of the Board of Trade and of the Railway and Navigation Companies give higher figures (30,000 or 40,000 a year). Of course this phenomenon of migratory labourers is not confined to Ireland: we need only recall the "*Sachsengänger*" of Germany (about 100,000), the Belgian labourers in the North of France (about half that number), the Italian workmen who seek labour in France, Austria, Switzerland, etc.

[6] *Report on Migratory Labourers for* 1900. The report for 1906 (p. 20) estimates the total profit brought back to Ireland at £275,000. V. in the appendix of the report of 1900, the extracts from a parliamentary report by Mr. Arthur Wilson Fox on the life of the Irish Labourers in

a week (an average of 18 shillings) they sometimes bring home as much as £10 or £12, and their average profit amounts, it is said, to £7 10s. per head.

It must not be imagined that this provides them with a fixed and assured source of income. An increased use of agricultural machinery in England and Scotland would be sufficient to lessen the demand for manual labour. Even now a bad harvest in Great Britain means that the migratory labourers return home empty-handed. And further, one single failure of the potato-crop in Ireland means not merely extreme poverty but a condition of actual distress, of famine. During the last thirty years there have been in Western Ireland five or six years of famine, either total or partial. Not many months ago one might have seen in the counties of Mayo and Galway a whole population of men and women who were in no wise either vicious or degraded, literally dying of hunger owing to the almost complete failure of the potato-crop, and this in the twentieth century, in the midst of the United Kingdom, within fifteen hours of London!

Meetings were held in various places, in order to ask, not for charity, but merely that certain public works long promised and long postponed, should now be carried out in order to provide the unfortunate population with the means of living. One day, at Belmullet, a band of four or five hundred peasants, shouting that they were starving, and nearly all holding eviction processes in their hands, broke in on a Board of Guardians, crying: "Work or Food!" Otherwise there would be only one choice left for them, namely, emigration—that is the slums of New York—or else the workhouse, that is to say, the pauper's asylum, until they should be ready for the pauper's grave.

England and in Scotland. The details are heart-rending. One fact of comparatively recent growth is the increase in the number of young girls who enter on this annual service. Their number is estimated at 10,000. They come over in parties under the guidance of a "gaffer" who is usually the father of one of them.

III.—The Remedy.

For these periodical famines and this chronic distress England has for a long time known only one remedy: emigration, helped and subsidised by the Government. Even at the present day, how sad it is to see in every village, on the walls, in the market places, or in the post-offices, those great coloured posters, maps of Queensland or Manitoba, with appropriate pictures representing the life of a colonist in those fortunate lands: and close by them another series of placards representing figures in uniform, batteries of artillery, infantry drilling under the shade of Indian palm trees, with all details as regards enlistment and the rates of pay. These are the regulation official advertisements of the War Office and the Colonial Office. These are the Anglo-Saxon methods of purification. Their aim is to purge Ireland of all that is left of the indigenous race, of "the natives."

Yet in England during the last quarter of a century there has been no lack of public men who have denounced this state of things in the West of Ireland. "The shame of our statesmen," as Mr. T. W. Russell once called it, "a sin against the divine law and against humanity." As early as 1880 General Gordon, who died soon afterwards in the defence of Khartoum, sounded a note of alarm in the *Times*. "I must say, from all accounts and from my own observation, that the state of our fellow-countrymen in these parts of Ireland is worse than that of any other people in the world—let alone Europe. I believe that these people are made as we are; that they are patient beyond belief; but, at the same time, broken-spirited and desperate, living on the verge of starvation in places in which we would not keep our cattle. The Bulgarians, Anatolians, Chinese and Indians are better off than many of them are. I am not well off; but I would offer Lord So-and-so, or his agent, £1,000 if either

of them would live one week in these poor devils' places and feed as these poor people do."[1]

It required something more than a letter of General Gordon's to awaken England. It required the agitation and the great agrarian crisis of 1879 to 1890; the cry of no-rent, and the close proximity of revolution; the feeling that in Western Ireland there lies an ever-recurring danger for the peace of Ireland. Indeed it is always the home of agitation, the danger zone par excellence. It is there that social warfare breaks out: it is there that the Land League was founded, and that the Plan of Campaign was conceived and partly executed. When therefore, in 1891, the country was emerging from the great agrarian struggle, an English minister, Mr. Arthur Balfour, then Chief Secretary for Ireland, endeavoured to find a solution for the land problem of the West.

Popular opinion had long fixed upon its own solution of the question; a solution that was simple, radical and careless of many practical difficulties. Seeing that it is the transaction known as the Clearances which has done all the harm, those who aim at remedying matters must proceed to reverse the operation. One must restore to cultivation the soil required for cultivation, and give back to the people the land that is their heritage. The land for the people—that was the motto of the Land League. Between the area of the land and the number of inhabitants all proportionate balance has been destroyed. It must be re-established. Some of the owners of these waste *latifundia* must be expropriated, and the territories cut up into farms of moderate size for the peasants to buy back. This is all the more necessary because the land in the West, unlike the plains of Meath or Tipperary, is not particularly suitable for cattle-raising. Even the best districts are only of moderate value, very apt to deteriorate and return to their original state of nature. And the execution of this scheme would be all the more

1 Quoted in *Hansard*, March, 13th, 1901, p. 1439.

easy because, owing to American competition,[2] cattle-breeding in the West is no longer a very profitable investment. The Clearances were not merely a great crime against society: they were, all things considered, an unprofitable business transaction; and now the better-advised among the landlords are already beginning of their own accord to turn their unproductive ranches back into ploughed land. What we want, say the Nationalists, is a re-colonisation of Connaught, a large redistribution of the soil, a vast agrarian re-settlement of the West of Ireland.

This scheme, that is to say, the radical and popular solution of the question, has not proved too alarming for the Conservative Government, in principle, subject, however, to the reservation that they will only apply the principle with the utmost caution, and will not sanction State intervention as a substitute for the natural action of economic forces, but merely as a stimulant. These principles they first admitted in 1891. It was then that, on Mr. Balfour's suggestion, they proceeded to deal with the social and economic improvement of the West. Their first step was to form an autonomous and administrative body, enjoying large powers within certain strictly defined limits, namely, the Congested Districts Board.[3]

This institution is a great Board *à l'Anglaise*, an almost independent commission of a non-political character. It

[2] The graziers (entrepreneurs of cattle-breeding, who rent their grazing land for eleven months every year from the landlords and pasture their cattle on them) are no longer successful in making money. About the middle of the 19th century the landlords had introduced Scotchmen into the West as graziers. But these settlers have now disappeared, and the trade is usually carried on by local business men, who are not unwilling to add to it the trade of usurer.

[3] *Land Act of* 1891, Section 41 (54 and 55 Victoria, ch. 48). Many Acts have since been passed modifying the original Act.—V. 56 and 57 Victoria, ch. 35.—57 and 58 Victoria, ch. 50.—59 and 60 Victoria, ch. 47.—62 and 63 Victoria, ch. 18.—1 Edward VII., ch. 3 and ch. 34.—3 Edward VII., ch. 37.—4 Edward VII., ch. 34. The Board has authority over only a certain number of districts which are strictly defined and scheduled as officially *Congested Districts*. A Congested District is, according to the Act, a district which includes at least 20 per cent. of the population of a county, and in whose electoral divisions the average rateable valuation is less than 30 shillings per inhabitant.

includes some ten honorary members nominated by the Government, and is provided for executive purposes with a whole army of clerks and officials, together with a budget of about £80,000.[4] We may here, perhaps, venture to express the opinion that from a general point of view we have no very deep admiration for these great British Boards. They have the advantage, doubtless, of being above popular influences, but they do not possess the advantage of freedom from Governmental pressure. Their tendency is to become irresponsible meeting places of somewhat mediocre amateurs, where the incompetence of some members is only equalled by the careless indifference and prejudices of others; where every man is pulling the wires in his own direction; and, consequently, where business is done without order and method and without any prearranged plan of action. As a matter of fact, though one finds in the C. D. B. (as it is named), two eminent men to represent the interests of the peasants, two priests, Father O'Hara, Parish Priest of Kiltimagh, and Dr. O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe, the majority

The Congested Districts, according to the Act of 1891, comprise 428 "electoral divisions," or say, 3,411,000 acres of land, out of the 20,198,000 acres in Ireland; say one-sixth of the whole area of the country. They comprise one-ninth of the total population of Ireland viz., about half a million inhabitants. They include 96,792 holdings of the rateable valuation of £504,234 (say about £5 per holding). If one draws an imaginary line from Londonderry to Skibbereen, almost all the land to the west of this line (except County Clare) is a Congested District. This legal definition of the Congested Districts is very narrow and complicated. By confusing the boundaries it creates a whole world of difficulties and of administrative red-tape which retards progress. The whole province of Connaught, the whole County of Kerry, and the whole County of Donegal ought to be legally considered as Congested Districts. V. on all the matter in the text, the *Annual Reports* of the Congested Districts Board (Thom and Co., Dublin). *Cf. Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, Dublin, 1902, p. 258, etc., published by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. V. the Parliamentary discussions on the subject, especially Hansard, March 13th, 1901; March 14th, 1902; March 14th, 1905; June 28th, 1906. *Cf.* Etienne Béchaux. *La Question Agraire en Irlande*, Paris, 1906, p. 163, etc.

4 The Board is presided over by the Chief Secretary. Its ordinary budget shows receipts of £41,250, consisting of the annual yield of a portion of the Church Fund assigned to it under the Act of 1891; also two grants from the imperial budget of £25,000 and £20,000 (the second of these two dates from 1903). In all, £86,250.

consists of landlords and gentlemen of the vague philanthropist type, honourable men undoubtedly, but without any special knowledge of the country ; men who in practice surrender the keys of the place to a few Dublin officials. However, whether for good or bad, the new administration has now been at work for fifteen years. Let us enquire what it has accomplished during the course of those fifteen years.

It started on a right and broad-minded basis, namely, that the problem of the West is not entirely included within the land question or the "more-land question :" that an essential element in the work consists in raising the condition of the peasant, in developing his means of livelihood, and putting him in a position to make a struggle for his own living. To this theory we may trace a series of subsidiary operations of various kinds undertaken by the Board on parallel lines with their original object of "agrarian re-settlement." Some of these enterprises they started both intelligently and successfully, but of others, unfortunately, the same cannot be said. We may assert at once that they have not been successful in their attempts to improve agriculture and cattle-raising. They have done good work in selling seeds to the peasants at a cheap rate, in spreading a knowledge of preventive measures against diseases in crops or beasts, and in improving by selection and importation the breed of cattle and sheep. But the Board spends large sums on legions of agricultural instructors to whom nobody pays any attention, on model farms which are studied by nobody, and on experiments in the plantation of trees which have proved a pitiable failure. It has spent £50,000 in the last ten years for the pleasure of introducing the English hackney into Connemara as an alternative and substitute for the sturdy and hardy little ponies of the district. What a splendid advantage for the peasants, whose stable is often no better than a pig-stye, to have at their disposal some miles off a 500 guinea stallion ! Meanwhile, however, the

Board has reorganised the sea-fisheries which, though flourishing at one time, had lately almost disappeared from the west coast of Ireland. It has established harbours and ports, and curing stations ; it has discovered markets, and built and fitted out boats which it sells on credit to crews for whom it has previously provided a professional training. One family, in Donegal, a short time ago was able within two years to repay the price of a boat entirely out of profits made in fishing. In the islands about Arran, near Galway, there are now to be found fishermen with enough enterprise to go for a season's fishing in the North Sea.[5] Elsewhere, with the assistance of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society and of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, it has succeeded in multiplying the number of agricultural societies, and of various other societies, for production, for sale, and for mutual assurance ; as also of rural and Raiffeisen banks.[6] Indeed, all such forms of co-operation have attained to a marvellous development among these peasants who in outward appearance are so far behind the times, and yet in reality are so intelligent and adaptable. Finally, the Board endeavours to develop throughout the West those domestic and village industries which form a living element in the country districts of Sweden and Russia, and the preservation or establishment of which seems more and more in all countries to be the only possible means of reorganising rural life. Everyone knows how hard it is to vitalise these village industries ;

5 Sea Fisheries had at one time been very flourishing in the West ; but except on the Coast of Kerry and of Cork, where it had been re-organised through the efforts of Father Davis and the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, this industry had almost disappeared. Fishermen from the Isle of Man or from the Coasts of France had practically succeeded in monopolising it. The Congested Districts Board, stimulated by the energy of a competent man, the Rev. W. S. Green, has done much to revive sea-fishing in the West. The results, however, affect only a small number of families living near the coast. As a trade it is not very lucrative. The sea is too rough, the storms too frequent, and the railway rates too high. The Board, we may add, ought to have shown more activity in pushing forward its operations. Under this heading, in 14 years it has only spent £184,464, excluding loans.

6 See later.

how impossible it is to preserve them against the competition of machinery, except by maintaining in their hand-made work a high artistic value and a superiority of finish. The Board, we may note, creates nothing on its own account. It subsidises establishments that are in the process of formation, and stimulates the forming of co-operative societies. For instance, in Donegal it developed the homespun weaving industry, introduced new methods of manufacture, tested and marked the products, and organised a system of instruction and technical inspection. To-day Donegal sells £8,000 worth of homespuns per annum, and emigration has entirely ceased within that district. Throughout all the West, by means of classes, which were in reality workshops paying their women employées, it developed the industry of embroidery, and more especially that of lace: "Irish lace," properly so called, Carrickmacross guipure, Limerick or Youghal lace, and rosepoint of Inishmacsaint. All these beautiful kinds are sold by a charitable institution called the Irish Industries Association in the great centres of London and Paris.[7]

We now come to the principal object of the Congested Districts Board, namely, the re-settlement of estates. The problem is that of re-arranging holdings or farms in

[7] In fourteen years the Board has spent £52,000 on the rural industries in the West. All this subsidiary work of the Board comes in collision with a fundamental difficulty, namely, the conservative spirit of the individual, his distrust of new methods, and the absence of all desire for progress. The work of a public body like the Board is usually above the level of the individual, I mean above his moral level, which is the true factor of all progress. It has been found that in order to reach the individual, intermediaries are necessary. Therefore, during the last few years the Board has encouraged the formation of parish committees in the more backward districts (composed in each case of the parish priest, and a few local men of note). The members of these committees, living as they do among the peasants and being personally known to them, try to make a beginning by getting them to carry on small attempts at improvement and cleanliness; such as the constructing of a stable, or a ditch for manure, or carrying out drainage work, or cleaning their houses; and afterwards share among them the money prizes distributed by the Board. This system, which is due to the initiative of Father O'Hara, does a very great deal of good, and seems to be capable of development. There are at this moment (1906) 160 parish committees in existence.

suitable dimensions for peasants who cannot live on their tiny farms, or "dwarf holdings." The method of procedure is the following. In a district we find an over-populated estate where the tenant cannot get a living owing to lack of room, all the good land being reserved for cattle-raising. The Board buys this estate,[8] and redistributes it. It examines it with a view to alterations, and rearranges the share of each peasant, enlarging it either by adding a piece of the former pasture land, or by amalgamating two portions into one and removing one of the tenants to a new farm carved out of the grazing lands. It carries out, by means of the peasants' labour, all necessary improvements such as drainage, roads, and buildings of all sorts. Finally, when everything is ready, it re-sells to each peasant his new farm, accepting repayment by annuities running during a term of years as under the ordinary laws of land purchase.[9] The operation takes time, care, and equitable treatment; and, moreover, tact and firmness in order to overcome the resistance of the peasants. Their resistance is by no means an infrequent occurrence, and has recently

8 By means of advances made to it by the Land Commission, the Land Act of 1903 (Section 79) regulates the new procedure and recognises implicitly the vendor landlord's right to the bonus of 12 per cent. payable from the Treasury (V. above, p. 273, 4).

9 According to the provisions of the Land Act of 1903, in all cases that have occurred since the passing of that Act. The Board is blamed for making the farms too small. It is said that often they are not big enough to feed the tenant and his family (V. 3rd Report, p. 9; and 11th Report, p. 17). We have shown that the Land Act of 1903 empowered the Estates Commissioners, briefly speaking, to carry out the very same work of re-settlement throughout all Ireland, including the West and the Congested Districts, and that hitherto they have not done much towards this end. The work is of a delicate nature and could undoubtedly be better done by a local authority or administrative body than by one having powers over the whole of Ireland. For what concerns the Congested Districts see Sections 72 to 85 of the Land Act of 1903, especially Section 74, which fixed £1,250,000 (or 30 times the revenue derived by the Board from the Church Fund) as the maximum value of the vacant lands which may be bought by the Board and not, for the time being, be resold to the tenants. The immediate effect of the Land Act of 1903 has been to raise the price of land, more in the West than elsewhere, and the eventual consequences of buying at too high prices will be more serious in the West than anywhere else.

necessitated the granting of compulsory powers.[10] But it does not constitute a serious difficulty, and does not materially differ from what occurs during the re-settling operations now being carried out in German country districts under the names of *Arrondirung*, *Regulierung* and *Konsolidation*. If legal questions did not always, in the United Kingdom, mean legal complications, one might wonder why each landlord in the West has not carried out this operation for himself, on his own estate.

Another case. It may happen that in an especially over-populated locality there are no untenanted lands to hand wherewith to enlarge the "dwarf" holdings. Migration is then resorted to. Some of the peasants in the place are offered new farms, created out of lands bought, perhaps, some twenty or thirty miles off. Their own land is taken to enlarge that of their neighbours, and all parties benefit by the transaction. In this case the chief difficulty lies in the western peasants' unwillingness to "migrate." They love their little corner of land and their own neighbourhood: the idea of moving away from home alarms them. It is impossible to persuade the old people to "migrate;" and equally impossible to transplant to inland farms those who were born near the sea. In many cases it is only the poorest who can make up their minds to leave home, because they have no other alternative.[11] We may add that this unwillingness is

[10] Act of 1901 (I Edward VII., ch. 34). *Cf.* the Land Act of 1903, Section 82.

[11] We must add that the Western cottiers are often entirely uneducated. Another difficulty of the migration system is its costliness. The Board, as has been described, must arrange and complete in every respect new farms, with houses, fences, etc. It can only partly recoup itself by means of fines or payments of £60, £70, or £80, according to the case in question. And the imposition of these fines is severely criticised. It is said to put the tenant in the money-lender's hands from the very start. All this explains to a certain extent the fact that the Board has made but very slow progress in its migration work. On March 31st, 1905, it had only succeeded in "migrating" 207 peasants, at the average cost of £84 apiece (V. 14th Report, p. 19, etc.). We must recall the fact that Parnell had tried to push forward migration in the West on a large scale. He had founded a special society for the purpose, but it was entirely unsuccessful.

diminishing with the development of the work, owing to the success of its operations.

The success is indeed remarkable. Financially—excluding cases of migration—the work shows only a very small deficit.[12] As for the peasants, they are in a condition of rejoicing. No more rent to pay, no more landlords, no more business with the local tyrants called agents, middlemen, or bailiffs who used to humiliate and terrorise these unfortunates. Instead of them they are now dealing with men who, like Mr. Doran, the Board's Inspector, wish them well, meet them sympathetically, and try to help them to a living. "One can hardly understand it!" they say. We may indeed be tempted to ask why the Board progresses so slowly. In fifteen years (up to March 31st, 1905) it has bought 397,765 acres, upon which room will be found for 16,000 to 17,000 tenants. But what does this achievement amount to, when one considers that Connaught alone contains over 2,750,000 acres of cultivable land and over 110,000 families of peasants; and when one remembers that, during those fifteen years, emigration has swept away nearly 100,000 inhabitants from that province of Connaught alone. Does not the disproportion only seem all the more flagrant between what there was to do and what has been done? The reply made is that the experimental phase was necessarily a long one, because the problem was entirely new. It was necessary to advance prudently, by gradual steps, in order to avoid making mistakes that would have endangered the future of the work. But the truth is that, although the Board can claim the credit of having recognised the true solution of agrarian congestion in the West of Ireland, and of having tested that solution by practical experiments, nevertheless it has not had the energy—or the freedom of action—to apply it on a large scale. It has allowed secondary considerations to usurp the

[2] Average deficit: 5.5 per cent. of the purchase price of the land (14th Report, p. 14). In several cases the resettling of estates carried out by the Board has resulted in a profit.

principal place. It has worked after the manner of an amateur or a dilettante. It has marked down and pegged out the right way, but it has not followed it with determination.

In the first place, to carry out its programme, more money would be necessary. It is a fact to be remembered that from Imperial sources it only receives £45,000, despite the huge tribute of taxation which Connaught pays to the Imperial Exchequer. But, more especially, it ought to have wider powers. It ought to have the power of expropriation in the interests of the public, for which it applied officially in 1894,[13] but to which the Government has always refused to agree. Without this power it can do nothing. It may require certain untenanted lands in a district, in order to enlarge the holdings on a neighbouring property. The owner refuses to sell them; consequently the whole operation is blocked; at every turn its progress is checked; and we need hardly observe that speculation is duly carried on at its expense. Nevertheless, is the work to be given up? The required remedy is to hand. Ought it not to be applied once and for all? Surely it is evident that here we have a question which concerns not merely the welfare, more or less, of 500,000 to 600,000 peasants in the West, but which is for them, in the words of Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, "a question of life or death." The Board must make haste unless it wishes to see the solution of the problem postponed to that day, when, in the words of Canon Sheehan in *My New Curate*, the English will really begin to understand Irish affairs; namely, the day of judgment.[14]

[13] V. 4th Report, p. 10.

[14] An official Commission of Enquiry was appointed by the Liberal Government in July, 1906, under the Chairmanship of Lord Dudley, former Viceroy of Ireland, to study the whole problem of the West and the work done by the Congested Districts Board.

In an administrative sense the powers of the Congested Districts Board in the Congested Districts find a competitor within those very same districts in the Estate Commissioners, and also the Department of Agriculture (V. below p. 437). Reorganisation is evidently necessary in order to unify these various powers and thus simplify procedure. The Nationalists demand the introduction of an elective and representative element into the C. D. B., or any other authority that may replace it.

CHAPTER IV.—THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION

IRELAND, according to her English rulers, is not so poor as is generally believed. In any case, they say, during the last half century she has made material advances on the road to prosperity. They will tell you to consult statistics. The deposits and money balances in the great banks, which in 1849 only amounted to £7,469,675, on December 31st, 1884, reached a total of £30,627,000, and on December 31st, 1904, a total of £46,115,000. The savings-bank deposits, which amounted in 1866 to only £1,761,215, had risen by December 31st, 1884 to £4,321,000, and by December 31st, 1904, reached the total of £12,302,000. The gross receipts of the railways amounted to £2,566,799 in 1874, but in 1904 to £4,139,948. Surely, they conclude, these figures are convincing! Unfortunately such figures, in any case, are merely relative, and can only supply vague indications as to the economic situation of the country. We must, therefore, make a closer examination of the question.[1]

I.—NATURE AND HISTORY.

In the first place, it must not be thought that the land of Ireland is by nature unendowed with the goods

[1] V. on the economic question in general, E. Wakefield, *An Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political*, London, 1812. Sir R. Kane, *Industrial Resources of Ireland*, 1844. T. W. Grimshaw, *Facts and Figures about Ireland*, London and Dublin, 1893. *Report of the Recess Committee*, 1896 (new edition, 1907). *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, Dublin, 1902. Th. Lough, *England's Wealth Ireland's Poverty*, London, 1896. *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, Dublin (Ponsonby). *Cf.* Cardinal Perraud *op. cit.* I., 451, etc.; II., *passim.*

of this world, and predestined to misery for reasons either geological or climatic. Nature did not intend the island to be exceptionally poor any more than she intended her to be exceptionally rich. Situated at the extreme West of Europe and endowed with splendid natural harbours, she seems marked out as the port of call between the old world and the new. Her soil is celebrated for its pasture land. If well cultivated, it is fertile, and produces crops of various kinds, from flax to tobacco. Ireland has no mineral wealth, it is said, no coal, and therefore no possibilities for industrial development. This is a mistake. She contains 209 million tons of coal, which might easily be worked. In County Antrim there are estimated to be 30 million tons of iron ore.[2] In Ireland we find also copper ore, lead, zinc, excellent clays for bricks and pottery, admirable marble,[3] granite, and slate quarries. And finally she possesses immense reserves of power stored up in her turf bogs, or lying unused in her rivers and waterfalls. But all this, unfortunately, is as though it did not exist. Ireland is not a country without value. It is a country in which there are genuine possibilities and resources, but they are possibilities that have been undeveloped, and, in some cases, unexplored, down to our own days. We must begin by tracing the historical fatality to which this result is due.

It is true that at certain periods of her history Ireland has been fairly prosperous. She prospered, for instance, under James I. and Charles I. Her agriculture and commerce were then in a flourishing condition, as were also her woollen and linen manufactures. After the appalling cataclysm of the Revolution had passed away, she gradually began to recover. So well, indeed, did she progress that England, who was then laying the

[2] Figures given by Professor Hull in 1886 (Eardley-Wilmot Committee), and also by Sir R. Kane in his work, *Industrial Resources of Ireland*, 1844.

[3] Donegal marbles, black Galway marble, and green Connemara marble, the latter being exceptionally beautiful.

foundation of her economic supremacy, became uneasy, and very soon denounced Irish competition as dangerous. At the end of the seventeenth century, as Froude said, "the mere rumour of a rise of industry in Ireland created a panic in the commercial circles in England. The commercial leaders were possessed of a terror of Irish rivalry which could not be exorcised."[4]

England then undertook, with a selfishness for which the dominant mercantile theories of that day form but a poor excuse, to paralyse, and finally to destroy the industry and the commerce of Ireland by means of prohibitory measures. Soon after his coronation William III., in reply to a petition received from some English weavers and supported by a resolution of the House of Commons, said that for his part he would do all that he could to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland.[5] As early as 1663 a Navigation Act, confirmed in 1670, and completed in 1696, excluded Ireland from colonial commerce. In 1663 and 1669 the English market was closed to Irish cattle, which were declared "a public and common nuisance," as also to Irish meat, butter, and like products. In 1699 the Irish were forbidden to export woollen goods, the importation of which into England had been restricted from 1660 by means of prohibitive duties. The exportation of raw wool being already forbidden (from the same date) there remained only the resource of smuggling. This was soon organised on a large scale, and, as was said at the time, turned Munster and Connaught into a French province. But even this was not the culminating point. Under William III. and Anne, the cotton industry was paralysed by an English

4 *The English in Ireland*, I., 443, 446.

5 "The English," says Froude, "deliberately determined to keep Ireland poor and miserable, as the readiest means to prevent it being troublesome." Concerning the history of the economic restrictions imposed by England on Ireland, V. the classic work by Hely Hutchinson, *Commercial Restraints of Ireland* (1779), Edition of 1882. *Cf.* an excellent monograph by Miss A. E. Murray. *History of the Commercial and Financial Relations between England and Ireland.* London, 1903.

import duty of 25 per cent. At one time Ireland had manufactured sails for the whole English navy. This industry was killed by a prohibitive duty. The manufacture of glass, a flourishing industry at Birr, was destroyed by orders of 1736 and 1746 forbidding the export of the product. A similar fate overtook the manufacture of beer, malt, hats, gun-powder, and hardware. "One by one," says a great Irishman,[6] "each of our nascent industries was either strangled in its birth or handed over gagged and bound to the jealous custody of rival interests in England, until at last every fountain of wealth was hermetically sealed."

The day was to come when the sources of Ireland's wealth should once again be opened, though not until a whole century had passed by, a century of famine, misery and prostration, during which Ireland saw the entire strength of her national life drained away by absenteeism and emigration, while her finances remained a prey to the recklessness and corruption of her rulers.[7] The demand of the 40,000 Volunteers raised in 1778 was not merely for the political, but also for the economic liberation of Ireland. On the day of their first review in Dublin they planted before the statue of the king two pieces of artillery bearing the following inscription :—*Free trade or this* . . . . . A few months later all the commercial and industrial restrictions devised by England had been abolished. Economically speaking, Ireland was at length mistress in her own house, and the progress achieved by her in less than twenty years seems little short of marvellous. Grattan's Parliament provided fresh scope for her productive power by introducing protective duties and also a system of bounties ; although, indeed, the latter were far from counterbalancing the high protective tariffs of England. "The industrial aspect of Ireland

[6] Lord Dufferin, *Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Irish Land*, London, 1867, p. 129.

[7] Lecky, *History of England in the 18th Century*, II., 420, etc. IV., 365, etc., on the scandals of Wood's false coinage and the notorious pension list.

rapidly changed. Ruined factories sprung into life and new ones were built. The manufacture of hats, of boots and shoes, of candles and soap, of blankets and carpets, of woollens, of printed cottons and glass, all sprung into importance, while the linen manufacture, which had decayed during the American war, quickly revived, and in ten years the export of various kinds of linen doubled. . . . The population of the towns began to increase . . . Dublin became a home of arts and learning."[8]

Between 1785 and 1799 the exports of Ireland to England rose from 1 million to 5 or 6 million pounds sterling, and this in spite of the British duties. Meanwhile the English imports into Ireland, though free of all duties, for Ireland had never attempted to reply to the English protective system by setting up an Irish tariff, were reduced from 2½ millions to one million sterling.[9] "There is not a nation on the face of the habitable globe," said Lord Clare, "which has advanced in cultivation, in agriculture, in manufactures, with the same rapidity in the same period as Ireland."

Then came the Rebellion of 1798, and the Act of Union, which abolished commercial bounties in Ireland, and decreed the progressive reduction of Anglo-Irish customs duties. A few years later, this measure resulted in a regime of the amalgamation of the customs of the two countries. From that day onward Ireland sinks rapidly downwards on the slope of economic decay. The consumption of luxuries decreases. From 1800 to 1827, the consumption of tobacco was reduced by 37 per cent, and that of wine by 47 per cent. In the year 1800, the town of Dublin possessed 91 woollen factories employing 4,938 workmen; in 1840 there were only 12 of them left, employing 682 men. In the year 1800 she possessed

8 Miss A. E. Murray, *op. cit.*, passim.

9 These figures are taken from a speech of Pitt's (Russell, *Ireland and the Empire*, p. 4, 5). From 1785 to 1800 the consumption of tea increased in Ireland by 84 per cent., that of wine by 74 per cent., tobacco by 100 per cent. and coffee by 600 per cent.; there are no figures to be compared to these during the same period in England. (*Spring Rice Commission on the State of the Irish Poor*, 1830).

2,500 silk looms; only 250 remained in the year 1840. Belfast, in 1800, included within her population 27,000 workmen employed in the cotton trade; in 1839 there were only 12,000. In the year 1800 there were, in the County of Wicklow, 1,000 frames for flannel; in 1841 there was not a single one. In 1800 there were at Roscrea 900 persons employed in the woollen trade; in 1841 there was not a single workman to be found.[10] Throughout the whole century, we find that this process of decay continues and increases, being augmented firstly, by the Great Famine and Emigration, and secondly, by Free Trade, the adoption of which was, unfortunately, contemporaneous with a general development in the means of transport all over the world. England, which under the protection of her customs-barriers had during two centuries been winning her way to industrial supremacy, was now under commercial freedom to witness the full expansion of her prosperity. But for Ireland, Free Trade, on the contrary, merely accentuated the process of decay. She was not in a position to struggle against foreign competition. During the 19th Century Ireland suffered as much from Free Trade and from the doctrines of the Manchester School, as she had suffered throughout the 18th Century from mercantilism and commercial restrictions.

II.—The Industrial Situation.

In short, at the end of the nineteenth century she finds herself, economically speaking, lower than ever in the scale.[1] The signs of her decay are everywhere apparent. Apparent in the wasting away of her sources of wealth, and in the loss of energy among her people; apparent in

[10] Figures taken from the report of the Spring-Rice Commission above mentioned. *Cf.* W. J. Battersby, *The Fall and Rise of Ireland* (1834).

[1] I must ask the reader to consider my remarks in these pages conjointly with those in Chapter III. of Part III., in order to obtain an accurate impression of the present economic situation in Ireland.

the deserted condition of her country districts, in the miserable poverty of her cottages, and in the melancholy dilapidation of her towns, even though the latter do not always—as in the case of Galway—show one house in ruins out of every two, and present the appearance of a town recently besieged and sacked. Decadence is written large in her ill-kept streets, which house a population of lazzaroni degraded by a life of *far niente* and whiskey. The signs of it are unmistakable in those old deserted palaces, in those sordid slums,[2] the lowest dens imaginable of vice and disease ; also we may add in the closing down year by year of manufactures ;[3] and, most of all, in the heart of the people who for over half a century have fled from a land where, as the poet Spenser used to say, fate has willed it that nothing should ever succeed.

A country cannot live without producing wealth. What wealth does Ireland produce ? How does Ireland live ?

Agriculture, as we have already stated, occupies, roughly speaking, 64 per cent, of the population, and produces approximately an annual revenue of forty millions sterling.

Ireland, moreover, has two or three industries that can

2 V. the *Liberties* in Dublin and similar quarters in such towns as Galway, Omagh, etc. In Dublin, out of 59,263 families (averaging from 4 to 6 persons), 21,702 (36 per cent.) live in one-room tenements (in London the proportion is only 14.6 per cent., in Glasgow 26.1 per cent., in Edinburgh 16.9 per cent.). The proportion is 10.6 per cent. in Cork, 15.8 per cent. in Limerick ; in Belfast it is 1 per cent. (Belfast is a relatively modern town). Another basis of calculation is the following : The number of lodgings consisting of one room and occupied by 5 or more persons is, in Dublin 8.69 per cent., in Glasgow 4.28 per cent., in Edinburgh 1.80 per cent., in London 0.59 per cent. A recent enquiry shows that there are 1,486 houses in Dublin the insanitary condition of which ought to lead to their immediate demolition. These 1,486 houses include 5,383 rooms occupied by 12,926 persons. It is hardly surprising that the death-rate in Dublin reaches the terribly high figure of 25 per 1,000, the highest of any town in Europe (the return for London is 17 per 1,000, and 16.1 per 1,000 for Paris and New York). Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, pp. 13 and 40.

3 At Dublin, although the population is stationary, the following places of business were closed in the year 1903 alone—two metal foundries, two mineral water factories, one printing business, one tobacco factory, one firm of pneumatic-tyre makers, one firm of carriage builders, two makers of saddlery and harness, etc.

be termed active and even prosperous. These are the shipbuilding yards in Belfast, the linen manufacture in Ulster, and the great breweries and distilleries in Dublin. Over fifteen thousand men are regularly employed in the ship-yards of Belfast, but few or none of them are Catholics, for this is a monopoly of the Orangemen. It is a flourishing industry. Belfast was able, lately, to claim the honour of having launched the biggest liner in the world, the Celtic. The linen industry, too, in Ulster, gives employment to about 70,000 workmen, including 28,000 in Belfast alone, and makes use of 31,484 machine looms. Fifteen years ago it was said to represent a capital of seventy million pounds.[4] Its prosperity, however, is on the decline, owing to the great decrease of flax cultivation in Ireland. As for the Irish breweries and distilleries, of which the largest are in Dublin, their annual production is estimated at fourteen million gallons of whiskey, and three million barrels of stout, most of which is exported. They probably do not give employment to more than 8,000 workmen.[5]

Secondary to these three principal industries, we may mention a certain number of woollen manufactures,[6] some paper factories, the poplin industry, once famous but now little more than a tradition, lace-making, which is not developed to one-quarter of its capabilities, and finally the fisheries, which are nowadays greatly reduced. Beyond these there is a more numerous remnant, or, as one might say, a sediment of tiny local industries. They have no market outside their locality, and no high standard of business. They merely struggle along on the brink of extinction, and it cannot be said that even one of them is really active. They are simply

4 Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, p. 751. *Cf.* Grimshaw, *Facts and Figures about Ireland*, I., 35. *Cf. Ireland Agricultural and Industrial*, p. 416.

5 *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, p. 458, 499. *Cf.* Th. Lough, *England's Wealth Ireland's Poverty*, p. 25, 26.

6 According to the last statistics, which were not entirely up to date, there were 114, giving employment to 3,323 workmen. Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, p. 751. *Cf. Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural.*

little trade associations, houses belonging to small manufacturers or contractors, with here and there a mill where American corn is ground; modest undertakings which by nature and connection are rather rural than urban.

Of the industries that are not directly productive, two stand out as worthy of special mention—the Banks and the Railway Companies.

The Joint Stock Banks[7] are nine in number, of which six are authorised to issue notes. The oldest bank and the most influential is the "Bank of Ireland," founded in 1783; for a long time, indeed, it enjoyed a monopoly, and to this day it is the only bank employed by the Treasury. The paid-up capital of these nine banks amounts in all to the moderate total of £7,209,230. They are all doing well. The least prosperous pays a dividend of 5 per cent., and the most prosperous a dividend of 20 per cent. One is tempted to ask how they arrive at this pitch of prosperity. It is chiefly due to the large sums received as deposits on which no interest, or merely a nominal interest, is claimed. The total amount of these deposits has never, since 1888, fallen below 30 millions sterling, and on December 31st, 1904, it reached the high figure of £46,115,000. The existence of so great a balance of deposits in so poor a country is, I think, due to the following causes: The Englishman, owing to his economic instincts, only leaves his money at the bank when he wants it ready to hand. But the Irishman, like the Frenchman, has an innate love of saving, and lays aside every possible farthing. Having saved it, however, he does not always know what to do with it. Owing to the non-existence of industries and the lack of personal

7 V. Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, p. 765, etc. *Banking and Railway Statistics* (bi-annual). The following are the names of the Banks and the dates of their foundation:—*Bank of Ireland* (1783), *Northern Banking Co.* (1824), *Hibernian Bank* (1825), *Provincial Bank* (1825), *Belfast Banking Co.* (1827), *National Bank* (1835), *Ulster Bank* (1836), *Royal Bank of Ireland* (1836), *Munster and Leinster Bank* (1885) The two latter are not empowered to issue notes; nor is the Hibernian Bank. The value of the notes issued amounted to £6,781,000 in 1904. At that date, the capital amount of British Funds the dividends on which were payable at the Bank of Ireland, was 35 millions sterling.

initiative, he lets it lie at the bank. And now at this juncture it would be well to enquire what do the banks do with this unemployed money which has cost them nothing to obtain? Do they, for instance, use it to assist local industries or commerce? Most certainly not. They send it to England to be invested in the public funds, or in English and Colonial securities and enterprises. By this means the saving instinct of the Irishman bears no fruit for Ireland. Its produce is drained away, and by a supreme irony of fate, actually goes to help the government of the oppressor. Therein lies the secret of the prosperity of the Irish banks; that is why their profits are independent of Irish industry or commerce, and why their dividends can continue to increase while Ireland is settling deeper and deeper into decline.

Ireland then is exploited by her banks; and in a similar manner she is exploited by her railways.[8] Her small network of lines, comprising only 3,270 miles of railway, was constructed by private companies under a system of concessions corresponding to those in England. As in England, the State originally advanced certain subsidies to the companies owning concessions, in aid of construction (about £5,000,000). The share capital of these companies now amounts to £26,846,301, and their capital indebtedness to £11,116,951. The cost of construction does not exceed the very moderate average of £13,000 to £15,000 per mile, although in England the corresponding figures run as high as £60,000 to £70,000. The mileage covered is small, being in all less than that of one of the great English companies, and still less as compared with those of France. There are very few double lines.[9] The rolling stock is inadequate both in

[8] Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, p. 758, etc. *Banking and Railway Statistics. Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, Dublin, 1902, p. 73, etc. V. the frequent discussions on this point in the House of Commons (notably April 30th, 1901). Two Commissions of enquiry are at present engaged in studying the railway question in Ireland and the systems of canals and internal navigation.

[9] In the year 1900 there were only 618 miles of double lines out of a total of 3,003 miles of broad-gauge railway.

quantity and in quality. The passenger service is extremely bad, and the arrangements for goods traffic even worse. The return of receipts per mile is very low, and shows but little advance.[10] The rates, on the other hand, are exceedingly high, and the working expenses are continually on the increase.[11] These are the principal characteristics of the system.

Though originally very numerous, the companies have gradually been consolidated or amalgamated until their number has dwindled down to six; and these six great companies in the year 1900 were working 2,531 miles of line, or about five-sixths of the whole.[12] Side by side with this tendency there has been another movement. The Irish railways have been endeavouring to ally themselves more and more closely with those of England, or rather the English companies have been endeavouring to bring the Irish companies more and more within the narrow orbit of their power, either by means of agreements or by control (buying up their shares). Thus the *Great Southern and Western* of Ireland is more or less officially allied to the English *Great Western.* The English *London and North Western* is proprietor of the *Dundalk, Newry and Greenore Railway,* and has a large interest in

10 The total gross receipts per mile in 1871 was £1,143, and in 1900 £1,196,or an increase of 4.6 per cent. in 30 years. (*Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural,* p. 71).

11 Working co-efficient in 1874, 56 per cent. In 1903 it was 61 per cent. (*Banking and Railway Statistics,* p. 44).

12 These are:—the *Great Southern and Western* (730 miles); the *Midland Great Western* (538 miles); the *Great Northern* (528 miles); the *Waterford, Limerick and Western* (342 miles); the *Belfast and Northern Counties* (249 miles); and the *Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford* (144 miles). The *Waterford, Limerick and Western* was amalgamated in 1901 with the *Great Southern and Western.* There remain therefore 5 great companies; and the movement towards consolidation is still in progress. One of the advantages of this movement is to reduce the general expenses and in consequence the number of company-directors, who are, as a matter of fact, out of all proportion to the importance of the lines. For 3,000 miles of line, there are still, it is said, 135 directors. Yet the management of the little net-work of Irish Railways is not so very important a matter. Sir G. Findlay, manager of the *London and North Western,* used to say: "I would undertake to do the whole of the work by myself in four days a week, and have two left for fly-fishing."

the *Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Company*. The English *Midland Railway* has acquired the *Belfast and Northern Counties* line.[13] The aim of the English companies is obvious. Ireland provides them with sources of traffic and a field of development. No less obvious is the harm done to Ireland by this economic invasion. She loses control over her railways, and consequently their management aims more and more at adapting itself to English interests, irrespective of those needs that are purely Irish.

These facts do not imply that the Irish Companies, financially speaking, are in an unsound condition. As in the case of the banks, one might say that they thrive on the poverty of the land. Their average dividend is higher than that of the English Companies.[14] How are we to account for their prosperity? To some extent, of course, it is due to the comparatively small amount of capital on which interest is paid; but more especially to their excessive rates. There is little or no competition between the various lines, and a war of rates is practically unknown. There might and ought to be some competition with the water-ways, with which Ireland has been richly endowed by Nature; 708 miles of canals (or rivers used in the canal system) are open for inland navigation. True, the whole system was initiated without any organised method, and since the introduction of railways inland navigation has been greatly neglected. Except for the *Grand Canal*, which connects Dublin with the Shannon, the Irish canals are little better than non-existent. Some of them have been bought up by the railways, as for instance the *Royal Canal* by the *Midland Great Western*. Others are paralysed by the regulations of the Board of Works. Some have been abandoned, and are now half silted up. In short, the railways are absolute

[13] It may be mentioned that an analogous state of affairs has resulted with regard to the shipping lines between Ireland and England.

[14] *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, p. 75. Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, p. 738. Out of 13 millions worth of ordinary shares, there are from 2 to 2½ millions which pay no dividend, and there are 4 millions that pay regularly over 6 per cent.

masters of their rates. Even the State possesses merely a nominal control over them; and any appeal to the Railway Commissioners, who are the recognised authority with regard to excessive rates, is too expensive and too complicated for practical use. The result is that the companies raise their prices as high as possible. "Put on traffic what traffic will bear." The average tariff per ton of goods, according to Board of Trade statistics for 1880, was 5s. 8.35d. in England, 5s. 5.50d. in Scotland, and 6s. 11.27d. in Ireland. In the year 1900 it was 4s. 10.26d. in England, 4s. 11.64d. in Scotland, and 6s. 7.90d. in Ireland. In fact, the average rate for the year 1880 in Ireland was higher than that in England by 21.83 per cent., and higher than the Scotch rate by 27.13 per cent.; while in the year 1900 it was 37.14 per cent. higher than the former, and 33.97 per cent. above the latter.[15] As for the average passenger rate, it varies in England from 7d. to 8½d.; in Scotland from 7½d. to 10½d.; in Ireland from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 2d. The tariffs for *smalls*, or lesser packages, are prohibitive, and preclude the small producer from conveying his goods directly to the market. Heavy traffic, such as coal, stones, marble, wood, minerals, has been made almost impossible by the high rates. In Galway there is an American company that forwards marble to America at lower rates than those charged for sending it to places within Ireland itself. The carriage of cattle, which alone represents 14 per cent. of the gross receipts of the railways, is not only very costly, but is so negligently carried out that Ireland loses about half a million sterling every year owing to accidents, delays and the like.[16]

On the English market, in spite of its close proximity,

[15] *Ireland, Agricultural and Industrial*, p. 80. These figures only represent a mean; they are independent of the distance that each ton was conveyed. (The Irish railways give no statistics as regards the tons per mile).

[16] For those who wish to forward goods from Dublin to Sligo, it is cheapest to send them by sea *via* Glasgow. Between Magherafelt and Belfast a service of carts has been organised (42 miles at 8 shillings per ton), in order to avoid the train service.

the Irish exporter is heavily handicapped by the rates of transit. Eggs from Normandy pay, in carriage to London, 16s. 8d. per ton ; eggs from Denmark 24s., and eggs from Galway 94s. per ton. Butter from St. Malo or Cherbourg pays 20s. per ton for its carriage to London (*via* Southampton) ; butter from Antwerp pays 22s., and butter from Tipperary 35s. per ton. But even these figures do not fully represent the existing condition of affairs. On his own market, actually, the Irish producer is at a disadvantage, owing to differential or through-rates so arranged as to play into the hands of the foregn importer.[17] By this inverted form of protection all the productive capacity of Ireland is made barren. Here we have a good instance of the tremendous power exercised over the economic conditions of the country by the railway companies, through their rates ; a power which fully justifies the often quoted words of Captain Tyler : " If the State does not control the railways, the railways will soon control the State."

This power has been both misused and abused by the Irish railways. They have neglected, even when they have not betrayed, the real and great interests of the country. Owing to them, in many places the produce of the soil is condemned to remain profitless where it lies. " Do you see that piece of water ? " was the answer given by a certain peasant to the English economist, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who during a tour in the West expressed astonishment that the farmers did not try to sell their fowl on the London market ; " If I could sell that water in Hell I could get any money I wanted for it ; but the job is to get it there." Who would believe that Ireland has no railroad to Castlecomer, the centre of the Leinster coal fields, which contain, it is said, 118 million tons of anthracite ? Not so very long since some zinc mines were being worked at Nenagh ; the high rates of the *Great Southern and Western* have forced them to close down.

[17] These differential tariffs are illegal. But, as we know from the experience of the Uited States, they are very hard to stop.

Recently a company was formed in Sligo for exporting compressed turf—it was charged 11s. per ton for carriage to Dublin, the value of the ton in Dublin being 21s. Openings spoilt, agriculture crushed, industries injured or bankrupt, and every attempt at reviving them paralysed from the start; these are the items in the ruin of Ireland, for which the railways are responsible.[18]

Before concluding our remarks on this score we may note two final touches in this picture of a nation's decadence. In the first place, Ireland lives on foreign products, although she can produce—and what is more, actually does produce with success—all the articles of her consumption. The army and the governmental institutions are kept supplied entirely from England; and the public, whether Unionist or Home Rule in politics, follows this example, and imports from abroad almost everything that it buys, except whiskey. The peasant sells his pig and buys American ham. Cobblers, saddlers, and binders import the hides required from England—those same hides probably that come from the Irish cattle exported by the cattle-breeders. The great Nationalist newspaper, the *Freeman*, is printed on English paper. Out of 177 Irish weeklies there are only 6, it is said, which use Irish paper. If one buys picture post-cards in Dublin one finds printed on them, "Designed in England and printed in Prussia." The Irish clergy, who are extremely fond of building churches, import marble from Carrara, and statues from Munich or Italy. In 1903 there were landed in Dublin from abroad 18,069 tons of beer, 2,328 tons of soap, 16,439 tons of slate, 17,539 tons of paper, 16,178 tons of building bricks, 564 tons of matches. It has been calculated that Ireland in this way pays an

18 Popular opinion now demands the State-purchase or Nationalisation of these railways. This solution, which has been more than once proposed by Commissions of enquiry, would, of course, be liable in Ireland to the inconveniences and dangers that it encounters elsewhere. One doubts whether the question can even be considered so long as the Irish Government remains in the hands of England. It would be better, one imagines, under present conditions, to organise a genuine and working method of State-control over the companies.

annual tribute amounting to about 20 million pounds worth of goods consumed.

There is another fact which must be noted with regard to the social economy of Ireland. During the last half-century the distributing classes have increased in greater proportion than the producing classes. Between the years 1841 and 1891, according to the comparison instituted by Mr. Charles Booth,[19] the well-known statistician, the proportionate number of persons employed in agriculture has fallen from 50.9 per cent. to 43.7 per cent.; that of persons employed in manufactures and building has been reduced from 29.3 per cent. to 20.4 per cent. On the other hand, the proportionate number of those employed in work connected with transit has risen from 0.5 per cent. to 2.6 per cent., which is a good sign; but that of individuals employed in commerce or dealing, middlemen, in fact, has risen from 2.6 to 5.4 per cent., which does not mean advance. Finally, the proportion of individuals employed in public services or in liberal professions has risen from 1.6 per cent. to 5.8 per cent., and that of persons in domestic service from 9.4 per cent. to 12.2 per cent. Thus the really productive class—that of the agricultural and industrial workers—has been continually on the decline during the last sixty years; and not merely in an absolute sense, but even relatively to the rapidly sinking population. On the other hand, the liberal professions are overcrowded. It is said that there are as many as 1,030 barristers in Ireland, 2,575 doctors in practice, and 1,637 solicitors.[20] According to the tables of comparative statistics for the United Kingdom, the liberal professions in England amount to 3.2 per cent., in Scotland to 2.8 per cent., and in Ireland to 4.4 per cent. of the population.[21] Similarly, we find an excessive increase in the class of domestic servants, a fact which

[19] V. Mr. Charles Booth's work as reproduced and published in *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, p. 64, etc.

[20] Evidence of Mr. Synott before the *Royal Commission on University Education*, II., p. 174, 301.

[21] *Financial Relations Commission*: Evidence, II., p. 109.

according to Mr. Charles Booth can only be explained by the low rate of wages ; more servants are engaged when their poverty makes it economical to employ them. There is also an excessive increase in the number of day labourers and general labourers ; these are men without any definite trade, ready for anything, and good for nothing. It is the existence of this class that gives ground for the statement that Ireland is gradually tending to become a reservoir of cheap manual labour for use in England. Lastly, there is an excessive increase in the numbers of shop-keepers, retail dealers, brokers, and middlemen of all sorts, which gives rise to another well-known saying that Ireland is approaching the condition in which people live "by taking in one another's washing." Of all the various classes in Ireland, only those connected with the distribution of wealth are increasing, and their parasitic earnings merely lead to the impoverishment of the class by whom wealth is directly produced.

III.—Overtaxation.[1]

Though decadent from an economic point of view, one might suppose that, financially at least, Ireland has derived some profit by its union with a "rich and generous partner." But the truth is that no Shylock was ever so greedily anxious to extract his pound of flesh from so poor a debtor. Ireland, it has been said, is drained dry by England of everything except water ! Every year she pays to her British suzerain, without profit or return, a financial tribute that might be estimated at seven millions sterling ; nearly four millions of this sum being rent due to absentee landlords, and nearly

[1] V. *Financial Relations Commission Report*, and its *Evidence*, London and Dublin, 1896. Th. Lough, *England's Wealth Ireland's Poverty*, London, 1897. V. in *Hansard* the report of many debates in Parliament, especially those of March 30th and April 2nd, 1897 ; February 9th, 1900 ; March 22nd, 1900 ; July 18th, 1901 ; July 25th, 1902 ; May 18th, 1904; May 1st, 1906 ; March 26th, 1908.

three millions representing the overtaxation of Ireland as compared with the rest of the United Kingdom.[2]

During those years of liberty that preceded the Act of Union, the finances of Ireland were in a good condition. Until 1798 she did not find it necessary to raise two millions a year by taxation, and contributed a very slight amount to the military expenses of England. The French war of 1793 involved her, it is true, in considerable expenditure, and in a heavy deficit, to which were added in 1798 the charges required for the suppression of the Rebellion. Nevertheless, in 1800, whilst England was paying £3 0s. 2d. per head in taxation, and had accumulated a debt of £42 10s. per inhabitant, Ireland was taxed only to the extent of 12s. 1d., and was indebted to no greater extent than £5 14s. per inhabitant. Her financial situation was far better than that of Great Britain.

It was this fact which prevented the authors of the Union, Pitt and Castlereagh, from at first attempting anything more than a political union between the two kingdoms. Even in the year 1800 they would have liked to unite and assimilate the two countries financially by giving them identity of fiscal system, a single budget, and the same Treasury. But this could not be suggested in the face of the wide difference of financial condition between the two parties. Accordingly, Article 7 of the Act of Union[3] was only able, in this connection, to lay

[2] The estimate given by Mr. Murrough O'Brien, Land Commissioner, before the *Financial Relations Commission*, I, p. 219, 288. *Cf.* II., p. 196. Mr. O'Brien arrives at a total of £3,431,716 by taking as his basis, for rural properties, some official statistics of the year 1872, and then adding to them a similar proportion for town properties. But as this figure takes no account either of the growth of absenteeism since 1872 nor of superior interests, rent charges, etc., it must be considered as below the mark. Prior, in 1729, estimated the rent of absentees, at £627,999 out of a total of 2 millions. Swift likewise estimated it at one-third of the total rent of Ireland. In this connection we only take count of money remitted to England at a dead loss, without any set-off. For this reason we do not mention the interest on mortgages belonging to Englishmen (£630,000 according to Mr. O'Brien), nor of purchase annuities for land, nor of repayments to the *Board of Works*, etc.

[3] V. its exact wording in the *Financial Relations Commission, Evidence*, I., p. 330, 331.

down a programme for the future. It enacted that when the respective debts of the two countries should be liquidated, or the amount of these debts should be to each other in the proportion of 2 to 15 (we shall presently show the true nature of this proportion), Parliament should have the right to fuse into one the two systems of finance and the two systems of taxation, "subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland," as circumstances might demand. We must note this exception, which, according to the Nationalists, guarantees the right of Ireland to a separate system of taxation. We should note also the danger and injustice of this provision, which, in fact, paved the way for forcing financial union upon Ireland as soon as her debt should have swelled to sufficient dimensions; that is to say, as soon as it had been suitably increased for her—as if an increase of debt could possibly mean an increase in the wealth of the country, and could therefore justify an increase of taxation! For immediate purposes, Article 7 of the Act of Union provided that the two countries should retain their separate budgets, and should each remain charged with their respective past debts (future debts were to be shared). Each party was to contribute to imperial expenses or expenses "of the United Kingdom," according to a proportion which was to be revisable every twenty years. This proportion was obtained by calculations based on statistics as to external commerce, as to the consumption of certain articles, and as to public expenditure. For the time being it was fixed, as between Ireland and England, in the ratio of 2 to 15.

This Article 7 of the Act of Union encountered a vigorous protest from the Irish. They at once declared it to be oppressive; and in spite of Ireland's relative prosperity at the time, they denounced this rate of sharing imperial expenses (2 to 15) as ruinous to their country. It was a rate based, according to their proofs,

upon miscalculations and upon unsustainable inferences.[4] Ireland, declared Grattan, would have to pay the price of her own enslavement; conquest would be followed by taxation and confiscation. Others recalled the celebrated saying of Dr. Johnson to an Irish member: "Make no union with us, sir. We should rob you." Twenty Irish peers protested against Lord Castlereagh's calculation, and in an official declaration predicted bankruptcy for Ireland.[5]

And bankruptcy was, in fact, to be its result. Hardly had the Union been voted when, by a refinement of oppression, the Government entered as a debt against Ireland all the expenses occasioned by the Union itself; a million and a half sterling for buying votes in its favour in the Dublin Parliament; two millions and a half for payments to partisans of the Union, and so on. Then came the war of 1800 to 1815 between the United Kingdom and Napoleon, involving Ireland (through Article 7 of the Act of Union) in excessive expenditure which could not be covered even by great increases in taxation.[6] It became necessary to borrow at usurious rates of interest. Ireland fell into debt, and year by year involved herself in worse financial difficulties. By 1817 her debt had quadrupled, as compared with 1800; it had now reached a sum-total of 112 millions sterling, though that of England had not even been doubled during the same period (its increase being from 489 to 737 millions). In this manner the two debts, once so widely disproportionate, were now brought to the ratio of 2 to 15. The

4 *Evidence*, I., p. 328, 329. *Final Report*, p. 142. According to the comparisons between the commercial balances of Great Britain and Ireland, the proportion ought to have been 1 to 29. Besides which, Castlereagh, when comparing the figures of public expenditure, had selected one year of peace (1793), and seven years of war (1794-1800), which was unfair. Moreover, he had taken no account in his calculation of the debt-charges of either country.

5 V. this document in Vol. I. of the *Evidence*, p. 328, 329. *Cf.* Lecky, *op. cit.* VIII., p. 475.

6 From 1800 to 1816 the average amount raised by taxation in Ireland was £4,865,262. During the sixteen years before the Union the average sum had only been £1,519,654. (V. *Evidence*, I., p. 322 and 334; *Final Report*, p. 143).

hypothesis provided for in Article 7 had been realised; and in this same year, 1817, on the plea of saving Ireland from bankruptcy, Parliament decreed a financial union between the two countries, amalgamated their budgets and exchequers, and ordered that henceforth all the receipts and expenditure of the United Kingdom should be consolidated into one single fund which was henceforth to be known as the Consolidated Fund. Thus the finances of Ireland, whose individuality had been preserved though not respected by the Act of Union, were now appropriated by the Parliament in London. Financially Ireland ceased to be a separate state, and became an integral part of the United Kingdom, except for one precarious right to eventual exemptions and abatements.[7]

Here we have the financial union; but it was not yet to be turned into a fiscal union. Ireland was then so much weakened that Parliament could not at once impose upon her the fiscal regime of England. It was only towards the middle of the century that the policy of fiscal equality between the two countries materialised in the shape of increased Irish taxation, and in the general squeezing of Ireland. Curious to relate, this process was originated by Mr. Gladstone, the future champion of Irish liberties. At that time he was being swept forward on the great current of opinion that was bent on reforming the whole system of English taxation. It was proposed to abolish duties on raw materials and

7 The operation carried out in 1817 was unfair, according to the Irish, because the quadrupling of her debt since the year 1800 could not possibly make Ireland richer or more able to bear an increased taxation! Moreover, they say, this operation was in formal contradiction of the Act of Union. According to the Act all future debts were to be treated in common; but the disproportionate increase of the Irish debt between 1800 and 1817 arose purely because all Irish loans were considered as going to swell Irish debts. (*Final Report*, p. 64, 87). As a matter of fact, Article 7 of the Act of Union is obscure and ambiguous. It is certain that the possibility of an increase in the individual debt of Ireland had been expressly considered by Castlereagh. This danger had been clearly pointed out by Foster and Grattan. (V. the question discussed by Mr. Childers, *Final Report*, p. 148. *Cf.* the saying of Grattan, *Evidence*, I., p. 339).

necessaries, and in their stead to strike at accumulated wealth by means of the income tax, while simultaneously raising the duties on alcohol. In fact, as early as 1842, Sir Robert Peel had raised the Irish duties on tobacco and stamps to the same level as those in England. But he had refused to impose the income tax on Ireland, and in 1843 had left the Irish tax on whiskey at a shilling a gallon. In 1853 Gladstone, on the contrary, extended the income tax to Ireland at the rate of 7d. in the pound, justifying himself on the grounds that it would only hit the rich (in 1855 it was raised to 14 pence and in 1856 to 16 pence). In 1853 Gladstone raised the duty on Irish whiskey by 8d. per gallon, alleging as his excuse that "he did not know that the rights of man demanded that an Irishman should get drunk more cheaply than an Englishman." In 1854 this duty was again raised by 8d; in 1855, by 2s. 2d.; and still higher in 1858 and 1860.[8] Very soon the fiscal assimilation of the two countries was completed, except that Ireland remained free of three or four secondary taxes.[9] Poverty-stricken Ireland was henceforth to pay taxes at the same rate as rich England. She was to be subjected to all increases in taxation that England might deem necessary for the development of the Empire—for the war in Egypt and for the war in South Africa.

The following figures enable one to grasp the financial results of the Union. In 1800, Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales) had 10½ million inhabitants, each of whom (taking the average) paid £3 0s. 2d. to the Exchequer; in 1892-93 (the year taken as a basis of comparison by the Financial Relations Commission) her

[8] As a set-off Gladstone annulled a capital debt of about 4 millions sterling, which had been contracted for the relief of the poor during the Great Famine. But the Income Tax alone has since then raised from Ireland five times the amount of this sum wiped out by Gladstone. (*Cf. Final Report*, p. 9, 11).

[9] Ireland is still free from the Land Tax (which, as is well known, is not so important in England as in France), from the inhabited house duty, from railway travelling taxes, and from taxes on horses and carriages and armorial bearings.

population had risen to 33½ million inhabitants, each of whom paid £2 4s. 10d. Ireland in 1800 had over 5 million inhabitants, each of whom paid 12s. 1d. in taxation. In 1892-93 she had only 4,638,000 inhabitants, each of whom paid £1 8s. 10d. During the 19th Century, therefore, Great Britain has trebled her population and reduced her taxation per head by 25 per cent. Ireland has seen her population diminished by 14 per cent. and her taxation per inhabitant increased by 140 per cent.[10] Moreover, the rate of taxation does not present a full view of the case. Being indirect, it is disproportionate. By laying equal duties on all, it imposes a heavier sacrifice on the poor than on the rich. Now, whereas England draws half her revenue from direct taxation and half from indirect, Ireland pays only one quarter of her contribution in direct, and three-quarters in indirect taxation.[11]

All these figures, an Irish Unionist will tell you, do not prove that Ireland is unjustly taxed ! In all countries there was an increase of taxation during the last century. Irish taxation per head remains lower than it is in England. Besides, both taxes and duties are the same for both countries What could be more equitable ? Can justice on one side of St. George's Channel become injustice on the other ? Ireland complains of being unfairly taxed on articles of consumption. But these taxes are not compulsory for anyone. The Irish can avoid paying them by drinking less whiskey '

[10] *Financial Relations Commission, Evidence,* I., 325 and 352. Mr. Th. Lough, M.P., after making a comparison between the average of the first sixteen years of this century and that of the year 1892-93, comes to the conclusion that the Irish tax-payer has seen his quota doubled, whereas the English tax-payer has seen his halved. (*England's Wealth Ireland's Poverty,* p. 56, 57). The figures would be still more striking if one were to compare the year 1792 with the year 1892. We may add that since 1892-93 the British taxes have undergone considerable increase, chiefly due to the South African War. For the financial year 1903-4 the average of taxation per head was £3 1s. 11d. in England, and £1 19s. 1d. in Ireland. (House of Commons, April 13th, 1905, declaration by the Chancellor of the Exchequer).

[11] The exact figure is 28.3 per cent. and 71.7 per cent. (House of Commons, May 15th, 1906, statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer).

There is some truth in these arguments; but that is all that can be said of them. In the first place, is it not somewhat excessive to claim that taxes on consumption are voluntary, when in a given country, with certain established customs and necessities, they strike not merely luxuries, but articles of general consumption? We need only say that while setting a premium on sobriety, this tax certainly leaves a margin for reductions.

In the second place, the fact that the taxes in two given countries are identical does not prove that they are equal; a tax on tea or a tax on coffee applied indiscriminately to France and England would produce very different effects in the two nations. In this manner the English system of taxation, which is devised so as to weigh as little as possible upon the masses in England, and therefore makes allowance for their customs and needs, presses all the more heavily on the Irish masses, whose customs and needs are entirely different. Meat, for instance, is exempted. But the poor in Ireland do not eat meat. Or again, the duty on beer is light. The Irishman drinks only about half as much beer as the Englishman. On the other hand, the duties are high on alcohol and tobacco, of which the Irishman consumes almost as much, only a fraction less than the Englishman, although he has less money to spend on them. Owing to the dampness of the climate, bad food, and general poverty, these stimulants are more useful in Ireland than elsewhere.[12] One last point remains to be considered. Can anyone maintain that equality in the rate of taxation means equality in the burden of taxation? Can anyone maintain that because the amount per head is less in Ireland than in England, therefore Irish taxation is the lighter of the two? Surely it is obvious that everything depends on the respective resources of the tax-payers in either country, and on their relative

[12] The Irishman in 1892-93 spent 12s. 5d. on Tobacco, 26s. 6d. on Alcohol, and 27s. 2d. on Beer; the Englishman 12s. 11d. on Tobacco, 29s. on Alcohol, and 53s. on Beer. (*Final Report*, p. 183, note).

capacities. The first point to be settled is the taxable capacity of each of the two countries, and how they compare one with the other. To determine the true ratio between the taxable incomes of Ireland and England, was, in fact, the principal aim of the great Extra-Parliamentary Commission [13] of enquiry which the Liberal Government found it necessary to appoint in 1894. Its purpose was to study the "financial relations" between the two countries. The rejection of Mr. Gladstone's two Home Rule Bills in 1886 and 1893 had shown the financial question to be then the weak point in every attempt at arranging a *modus vivendi* between England and Ireland.

No sooner had the report of the Financial Relations Commission been published, in September 1896, than a sudden ferment arose in Ireland. Until then Ireland had protested against her taxes being levied by an external power, but not against the amount levied. Suddenly she was officially informed that she was overtaxed, or in other words, robbed of a very considerable amount. The Joint Report of the Commission, signed by 11 out of 13 members, decided as a matter of fact that the Act of Union placed on the shoulders of Ireland a burden impossible for her to bear; that the increase of taxation laid on her in the middle of the nineteenth century could not be justified; and,

[13] The Financial Relations Commission was composed of 13 members and presided over by a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Childers (who was replaced on his death by The O'Conor Don, an Irish Unionist). It consisted chiefly of specialists such as Lord Farrer, Lord Welby, Sir B. Currie, Sir D. Barbour, Sir R. Hamilton, several Irish Unionists and three Nationalist M.P.'s. The terms of reference of the Commission were to enquire :—

(1) Upon what principles of comparison and by the application of what specific standards the relative capacity of Great Britain and Ireland to bear taxation may be most equitably determined.

(2) What, so far as can be ascertained, is the true proportion under the principles and specific standards so determined between the taxable capacity of Great Britain and Ireland.

(3) The history of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland at and after the Legislative Union, the charge for Irish purposes on the Imperial Exchequer during that period, and the amount of Irish taxation remaining available for contribution to imperial expenditure; also the imperial expenditure to which it is considered equitable that Ireland should contribute.

finally, that the present taxable capacity of Ireland did not exceed one-twentieth part of that of Great Britain (and was perhaps far less), whereas Ireland paid in taxes one-eleventh of the amount paid by Great Britain. Landlords and tenants, Unionists and Nationalists, Catholics and Protestants, all classes alike, united in protesting against the exploitation of Ireland by England. Everywhere meetings took place. At Cork, Lord Castletown recalled the Boston riots that formed the prelude to the War of Independence. At Limerick, Lord Dunraven, a Protestant, presided at a meeting together with Doctor O'Dwyer, a Catholic Bishop, and John Daly, a Fenian. In short, for the first time in history, all classes of Irishmen, forgetting their quarrels, seemed to have met together in order to claim justice from England. . . . Here then we may well pause to study their financial grievance, as stated by the Commissioners after their labours of enquiry.

Firstly, what basis of comparison were they to select for estimating the taxable capacity of either country? Population, comparative imports and exports, comparative home consumption—all these three tests must be regarded as inaccurate or as only giving approximate results. The next test suggested was the Death Duties. These, however, only deal with capital, not with income. The least inaccurate standard is that obtainable from the net returns of Income Tax. This gives us as a result that the taxable capacity of Ireland compared to that of Great Britain is as 1 to 21 or 22.[14]

A better method of arriving at the aggregate national incomes of Great Britain and Ireland is that suggested to the Commission by the eminent statistician, Sir Robert Giffen. He would ascertain in the first place the net annual revenue of the whole United Kingdom (including Ireland), and then separately the income of Ireland.

[14] *Final Report*, p. 18, 41, 171, etc. The question has been raised whether the Income Tax returns furnish too high or too low an estimate of the revenue of each country. On this point V. the arguments recapitulated in the *Final Report*, p. 62, and 172.

As regards the United Kingdom, we may take the usual and minimum figure of 1,500 millions sterling.[15] As regards Ireland, a first estimate, based on the gross returns of the income tax,[16] would give 76 millions; another estimate, based on the annual value of agricultural produce,[17] would give 63 millions. It is therefore at between one-twentieth and one-twenty-second that we must set the relative proportion of Ireland's income as compared with that of the United Kingdom.[18]

Let us accept these estimates, reply the Nationalists, although in reality they lend themselves to criticism.[19] But do even these returns of the income of the two countries form the true basis of comparison? No. True equality in taxation, according to Stuart Mill, means

[15] Sir Robert Giffen had stated the figure at 1,450 millions before the Commission in 1893, namely: 640 millions of income-tax-paying income, 630 millions for wages and salaries of the manual labour classes; and 150 to 200 millions of intermediate income. Mr. Bowley before the Royal Statistical Society stated the figures at 1,600 millions. (*Final Report*, p. 174. *Evidence*, II., p. 12).

[16] According to Sir Robert Giffen, it appears a tolerably safe rule to double the gross assessment of Income Tax in order to arrive at the total income of the country. (V. *Evidence*, II., p. 12, 164).

[17] Sir R. Giffen estimates at 40 millions sterling the agricultural revenue of Ireland. This revenue is produced by 64 per cent. of the population. What do the other 36 per cent. of the population produce? It is impossible to give details. We may assume that they produce, per head, as much as the agriculturists. This would give a total of 23 millions. The total revenue would be 63 millions (*Evidence*, p. 11, 13, 166). It is to be noted that Mr. Grimshaw estimated the agricultural revenue of Ireland at a higher figure than that of Sir R. Giffen, 46 millions net. Sir R. Giffen was successful in proving the inaccuracy of the basis on which Mr. Grimshaw's estimates were founded. (V. *Evidence*, I., p. 119, etc.; II., p. 13, etc.).

[18] *Final Report*, p. 175. From the Irish revenue must be deducted the economic drain approximately estimated at 6 millions (including not only rent due to absentee landlords but also the interest on mortgages held in England, interest on advances, and various expenses). *Cf. Evidence*, II., p. 196.

[19] According to Irish writers, Sir Robert Giffen's figures err on the side of excess. On the one hand, his estimate of agricultural income is based on statistics of prices paid for produce the greater number of which are too high. (*Evidence*, I., p. 283, etc.). Besides which it is unlikely that the 36 per cent. of Irish people who do not live by agriculture should produce per head a revenue equal to that of the agricultural community. Mr. Childers does not estimate the produce of the non-agricultural section at more than 8 million pounds; or the whole income of Ireland at more than 48 millions. (*Final Report*, p. 180).

equality of sacrifice. Let us, then, deduct from the total revenue of Ireland and Great Britain a sum (per head of the inhabitants) equal to the necessary minimum of subsistence, say £10. After this deduction there will remain 1076 millions of taxable income in Great Britain and 30 millions in Ireland; which figures give a proportion of 1 to 36.[20]

Thus one after another, witnesses and members of the Commission give their estimates. But the chief fact established by the general report is that not a single one of them estimates the taxable capacity of Ireland at over one-twenty-first part of that of Great Britain. We may, then, take this proportion as representing the minimum of what Ireland can in justice claim. Now Ireland, in 1893-94, contributed £7,568, 649, and England £89,286,978 to the Imperial Exchequer (say a proportion of 1 to 11, or 1 to 12). As Ireland ought only to have contributed 1-21st of the total, say £4,612,170, it is obvious that she paid £2,956,479 too much; in other words, that she was overtaxed to that extent as compared with the rest of the United Kingdom.[21]

[20] *Final Report*, p. 85. *Cf.* p. 70, 182. If we take £12 as the amount to be deducted, the ratio would only be as 1 to 40, or, according to another calculation, as 1 to 60. The principle of deducting a sum corresponding to the minimum of subsistence was admitted by Sir R. Giffen (*Evidence*, II., p. 166). and by the representative of the Treasury, Sir E. Hamilton (*Ib.*, I., p. 359). The Chairman, Mr. Childers, on the contrary, showed that as a rigid principle it is impossible to admit the exemption of all revenue below a certain figure. He showed also that between Ireland and England there is no common measure according to which one can fix a minimum of subsistence. Moreover, he added, and most justly, that as regards capacity for bearing taxation, the superiority of a rich country over a poor country is greater than its proportionate superiority in income. (*Final Report*, p. 182.)

[21] One must, it is true, take account of the following set-off. The expenses of the Constabulary or police, and those of primary education, are paid in Ireland out of the imperial budget, whereas in Great Britain the local authorities pay about half the cost of the police, and about two-thirds of the cost of primary education. It is necessary, therefore, when comparing the budgets to deduct (as Mr. Childers has done) from the total of Ireland's overtaxation in 1893-94 a sum equal to that amount which in England falls on the local authorities. The amount of this necessary deduction is estimated by Mr. Childers at half a million sterling in 1893-94. The net remainder therefore is about 2½ millions sterling. This is the amount of overtaxation in Ireland. (*Final Report*, p. 192).

What reply is made by the defenders of England's financial policy in Ireland ? [22]

Indirect taxation, they say, which is the chief subject of Irish complaints, does not aim at being proportionate nor pretend to be so ; this is a fact known to everybody. Take the East End of London ; you will find that it is considerably " overtaxed " as compared with the rest of London. " I do not believe," said Nassau Senior, " that Ireland is a poor country because she is overtaxed, but I think she is overtaxed because she is poor." " Besides which," they say, " we cannot consider Ireland as a separate entity, seeing that she has been united to England once and for all by the Act of Union in 1800. If Ireland is to be considered apart, why not Scotland also ; and if Scotland, why not also the ancient Kingdom of Kent ? " To which the Irish reply that the Act of Union guaranteed for Ireland, as for Scotland, the right to " exemptions and abatements " when necessary ; that Ireland must receive separate consideration because both her history and her geographical position have decreed that it shall be so ; and replying to Nassau Senior in his own words, they declare that under the same system of taxation England is the most lightly taxed, and Ireland the most heavily taxed country in Europe.

"Moreover," continue the defenders of the Treasury," even if we admit the fairness of the proportion 1 to 20, are we to base our comparison on the gross contribution of Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer ? Surely not. We must deduct the amount that Ireland costs the Empire ; that is to say, about £5,602,555 for the year 1893-94. As a net result Ireland only contributes £1,966,086 to the common expenditure, or about 1-32.[23] Far from

[22] V. the separate reports of Sir D. Barbour and Sir Th. Sutherland.

[23] And this proportion becomes less and less. In 1898-1899 it amounted only to 1-42. In 1903-1904 the net contribution of Ireland was only £2,200,500 (as compared with £92,957,500 paid by England as " imperial contribution," or a proportion of 1-43 (*Parliamentary Paper* 269 of July 18th, 1904). Ireland each year costs more and more and brings in less and less to the Empire. This is a strong argument in favour of Home Rule.

paying three millions above her share, she is actually presented with £1,065,630 ; far from losing she in reality gains by the Union !" "He who proves too much proves nothing," reply the Irish. "What justification is there for making these deductions, or for setting aside as specially Irish all the expenses now paid by Ireland, 'all such expenses as would disappear if Ireland herself were to disappear ?' Can it be denied that the civil list of the Viceroy is a part of the imperial expenditure, or the judicial expenses and the 'Castle' salaries ? Besides, admitting your distinctions, might we not also argue against the extravagant cost of Irish civil services permitted by your government. The enormous salary of the Lord Lieutenant, the large salaries of the judges, the abundance of sinecures, in fact all the unfair charges that result from a compulsory union between a very poor and a very rich country ? And might we not ask on what principle we are expected to contribute to imperial services, properly so-called, namely, to the army, to the fleet, and to the colonies, from all of which we derive no benefit ? The colonies are costly and bring no return to Great Britain ; why should Ireland, which costs Britain nothing, be obliged to find supplies for British Imperialism ?" [24]

Of all criticisms on the work of the Financial Relations Commission, the most serious is that, while pointing out an evil, it proposes no remedy. A complete alteration of the system of taxation in the United Kingdom was out of the question. A reduction of duties on articles consumed in Ireland would have meant re-establishing customs houses between Ireland and England. Besides which, is there anyone in Ireland itself, who would have advocated a reduction of duties on spirits ? There remained, therefore, only one possible course, namely, to leave the over-taxation of Ireland unchanged, but to grant her compensation in the imperial budget, in the shape of

[24] *Final Report*, p. 23, etc. ; p. 47, 50, 103, 188, etc.

annual subsidies for objects of public interest.[25] It happens at this very moment that Ireland is in need of funds for land reform, for raising the West out of destitution, for industrial development, and for the economic reorganisation of the country. Here we have the means of satisfying her needs. And surely some duty lies on England, some duty of reparation towards this country, whose development has been so long prevented by her oppression. Unfortunately this solution, if it be a solution, has been considered too costly by England. Nor does it dispose of the fact that Ireland is overtaxed. The question remains then: what is the best course to pursue? The uncertainty and difficulties surrounding every course provided the Unionists, who were in power from 1895 to 1905, with an excellent excuse for doing nothing. Their Government disarmed the Irish landlords by promising, and later, in 1898, by assigning them a large grant of money which freed them from all local taxation on their tenanted land; and having done this was able to let the Nationalists go on protesting at their pleasure. Ireland is still as heavily overtaxed to-day, as she was shown to be ten years ago. Even the actual figures exhibit very little alteration. In 1903-1904 Ireland paid into the Exchequer £9,748,500, and Great Britain £137,184,500 (which gives a proportion of about 1 to 14).[26] If we base our calculations on the ratio of 1 to 20, Ireland ought only to have paid £6,999,000. She has therefore paid more than her share by £2,749,500. The financial exploitation of Ireland by England is still going on.[27]

[25] *Final Report*, p. 51, 194, etc.

[26] Estimated true revenue according to *Parliamentary Paper*, number 269, of July 18th, 1904.

[27] *Irish Budget.* The receipts of the imperial budget, as collected in Ireland, amount to a total of £11,646,500 for the year 1903-1904; namely: Customs, £2,545,000; Excise, £5,904,000; Estate duties, stamps, etc., £1,033,000; Income Tax, £1,038,000; Post Office, Telegraph, etc., £980,000; Various headings, £146,500. Out of this total the official statistics estimate £9,748,500 as the total amount really received from Ireland (estimated true revenue).

The expenditure on Ireland paid out of imperial funds in the same

IV.—Emigration.

We now come to the great social factor, the fundamental characteristic of contemporary Ireland, namely, Emigration, or, to employ a Biblical word that expresses far better than all others the extraordinary and unexampled element in this phenomenon, the Exodus; the Exodus of the Irish from Ireland; the Exodus which, during the last sixty years, has torn from her no less than 5,300,000 of her children; which, even now, draws away from her about one per cent of her population in each succeeding year, and will soon cause it to be said that Ireland is no longer to be found in Ireland where flows the Shannon,

year amounts to £7,548,000, namely: £170,000 charged on the Consolidated Fund; £4,569,000 on Parliamentary votes; £1,405,000 on the Local Taxation Account (£376,000 is paid out of Local Taxation Revenue); £248,000 for Collection of Taxes; £1,126,000 for Post Office and Telegraph service. By deducting the total expenditure from the estimated true revenue, a remainder is obtained of £2,200,500. This sum, then, represents (according to the theories of the Exchequer) Ireland's contribution to Imperial services.

Other financial grievances of Ireland. Ireland, from a financial point of view, has other and subsidiary grievances against England, of which the following are a few instances:

The Act for the Disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland (1869) decided that the surplus of the Church Fund should be employed in relief of public sufferings and misfortunes. A small amount of the Church Fund was, as a matter of fact, used for these purposes. But the greater portion has been used for public education, etc. (V. *Ib.*). By this means the imperial budget was relieved of expenses that ought normally to have fallen on it, and Ireland suffered a corresponding loss. The same may be said of the Equivalent Grants, which have been established several times in favour of Ireland as a set-off for financial advantages granted to Great Britain by special Acts. Thus, the Education Act of 1902 having allotted large annual sums to education in England, a proportionate allocation has since then been made to Ireland under the name of the Irish Development Fund. Now, however, expenses which normally speaking should fall on the general budget, are charged on this special Irish Fund. In this matter, also, Ireland suffers loss.

Another subject of complaint is found in connection with the loans made by Ireland to England. Except for a few rare Free Grants or subsidies, England has never given anything to Ireland; she has merely lent her, from time to time, various sums of a more or less considerable amount, notably those for relief in time of famine, for assistance in charitable work, loans for the purchase of seed, etc., in which cases the Treasury has always recouped itself out of the local taxation (there have been a few remissions of debts, but under very onerous conditions for Ireland). The principle of making advances

but rather beside the banks of the Hudson River, and in that "Greater Ireland" whose home is the American Republic.

Emigration (apart from the immense numbers which make this modern Exodus a tragedy) is not in reality an isolated or exceptional fact in the sad history of the Irish people. Only too often one reads how persecutions and massacres have driven patriots into exile. The emigration of the Celts and the "Celticised" under Elizabeth was succeeded by that of the Catholics under Cromwell and under William III. and his successors, and by that of the Presbyterians in the 18th Century. Nevertheless the Irish population, estimated at 1,100,000 by Sir W. Petty in 1672, continued to increase throughout the 18th

that must be repaid, for purposes that are not reproductive, is one that certainly lends itself to criticism. It is ruinous for the debtor. It is in reality, as the English proverb says, "feeding the dog on his own tail." But the matter does not stop there. The Exchequer makes a profit on these loans; it lends at interest varying between 3¼ and 5 per cent., although it can obtain money at less than 3 per cent. This is a good instance of British generosity. (See the *Financial Relations Commission Final Report*, p. 12, etc., 163, etc.

The Treasury has also a curious custom of constituting itself the Mentor of Ireland. The following is a typical example:—By a Technical Education Act, the local authorities had been authorised, in 1889, to raise 1d. in the pound for purposes of Technical Education; and they had been promised an equivalent grant to the amount of £62,000 a year. Then, however, the Act of 1899, when creating the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, provided an annual grant of £55,000 for the same purpose. Since then, the Treasury, on its own authority, has refused to allow the grant provided in 1889.

Local Finance. The ordinary sums received by the local authorities of Ireland amounted for the year 1903-1904 to a total of £4,048,500, of which £2,993,308 was raised by the rates, £497,666 from tolls, fees, etc., and £557,526 from various other sources.

Before 1898, the rates in country districts included the *county cess*, paid by the tenant, and the *poor rate*, paid half by the tenant half by the landlord (or by the landlord alone if the rateable valuation was below £4). The Local Government Act of 1898 fused the two rates into one, which falls on the tenant alone. At the same time it allowed the rural local authorities an annual Agricultural Grant representing half the amount of the old *County Cess* and the old *Poor Rate* (the landlords being thus freed from local taxation on such of their lands as are let to tenants). The actual rates weigh heavily on the country. An official Commission of Enquiry, taking as its basis the year 1901, found that they represented a charge higher by one-third than those in Great Britain. (*Royal Commisssion on Local Taxation (Ireland)*, *Final Report*, p. 22). The average rate is about 12 per cent. of the rateable value. In some unions it rises as high as 7, 8, or 9 shillings in the pound, that is to say, to 35 or 45 per cent. of the rateable value.

Century and during the first half of the 19th,[1] until in 1841 it was officially returned as amounting to 8,175,124 inhabitants. By 1846 it had reached the approximate figure of 8½ millions. Then came the Great Famine. Suddenly a flood of emigration burst forth with unexampled and irresistible violence. Within the five years between 1846 and 1851, it swept away 1,240,737 persons. These unfortunates were suddenly handed over defenceless to the dreadful strangeness of exile, or to the cruelties of those slave-drivers, the emigration agents. They were herded on to the "coffin-boats," such as the *Avon*, on which 246 passengers died out of 552; or the *Virginius*, from which 267 out of 476 had been buried at sea before the end of the passage. Nevertheless

There have been periods when it has been known to rise as high as 13 shillings in the pound. (*Financial Relations Commission, Evidence*, I., p. 75). *Cf. Returns of Local Taxation in Ireland for* 1903-1904, p. 5 and 9). It must be remembered that the rateable valuation is far lower in proportion than in England. The average per head is only £2 10s. as against £5 in England. (*Local Taxation Commission, Final Report*, p. 21). This figure of £2 10s. is the minimum in England (it is to be found, for instance, in the East End of London). In some unions in the West of Ireland the figure falls as low as 10 shillings per head. (*Cf. Census*, 1901, *General Report*, p. 88).

The local authorities in Ireland, like those in England, receive grants. In 1898 the system of these grants was reorganised. They are:—(1) The produce of the licence duties raised in Ireland (plus two special and supplementary allowances of £40,000 and £79,000 a year). (2) 9 per cent. of the sum annually assigned to the local authorities of the United Kingdom out of the Death Duties. (3) 9 per cent. of the surtaxes on beer and alcohol. (4) An annual Agricultural Grant of £727,655 representing half the County Cess and half the Poor Rate for the year 1896-1897; the figures of that year being selected as a basis. The amount of these grants is paid into the Local Taxation Account where it is divided (somewhat unequally) between the local authorities. Each of these grants has a special object. *Cf.* the *Local Taxation* (*Ireland*) *Returns* (*Annual*).

[1] V. the *Census of Ireland*, 1901, *General Report*, p. 1 to 3. A semi-official enquiry in 1788 returned the number of the population at 4,040,000. In 1805, Major Newenham's calculations gave a total of 5,395,456. The official Census did not begin until 1821. That of 1821 gives 6,801,827 inhabitants; that of 1841 gives 8,175,124 inhabitants. Dr. Grimshaw, the Registrar-General, estimates the Irish population in 1845 at 8,295,061. (*Financial Relations Commission, Evidence*, I., p. 110; *Facts and Figures about Ireland*, Dublin, 1893, p. 8). *Cf.* O'Rourke, *History of the Great Irish Famine*, Dublin, 3rd Edition, 1902. Lord Dunraven, *The Crisis in Ireland*, London and Dublin, 1905. *Cf.* the *Emigration Returns* published every three months by the Registrar-General of Ireland and the *Census* of 1901.

England continued to preach emigration as her new Gospel, and to favour, and subsidise it. The English press sent up cries of joy at the idea of seeing Ireland emptied of the Irish people. "In a short time," wrote the *Times* in an often quoted article, "a Catholic Celt will be as rare on the banks of the Shannon as a Red Indian on the shores of Manhattan!" The tide of emigration, which in 1851 had reached the appalling proportion of 34.4 per thousand of the population, abated somewhat after 1852[2], and more especially after 1857. From 1857 onward it remained below 15 per thousand during the whole period up to 1880, with the exception of a short interval between 1863 and 1866. The actual numbers of emigrants represented by these percentages are worth noticing. From 1851 to 1861 they numbered 1,149,118; from 1861 to 1871 they numbered 768,859; and from 1871 to 1881, 618,650. About the years 1875-1877 there is a respite. The annual emigration figures fall, for the first time, below 40,000, and—a most unexpected phenomenon—we actually find the population of Ireland slightly increasing in 1877. But in 1880 the rush began again with renewed intensity. In that year the usual rate of 15 per thousand was passed, and in 1883 the figures rose as high as 21.6 per thousand. In that year Ireland lost, at one blow, as many as 108,724 emigrants. Since 1885, we may add, the evil has tended to abate. In 1892 the number of emigrants sank to 32,241, which is the lowest annual return during the second half of the nineteenth century. Whereas between 1881 and 1891 there had been 768,105 emigrants, between 1891 and 1901 there were only 430,993, or an annual average of 9 per 1,000 (about half

[2] It had never completely ceased, except, perhaps, during the years when Ireland was self-governing (1782-1800). Since the beginning of the 19th century, increasing poverty had caused the reappearance of a certain amount of emigration, but of no great volume. From 1831 to 1841, 214,047 persons left Ireland. (O'Rourke, *op. cit.*, p. 486). In 1852, the figure was 30 per 1,000. In 1853, 27.9 per 1,000. In 1854, 23.2 per 1,000. From 1863 to 1866 the rate varies between 18 per 1,000 and 20.5 per 1,000.

the death rate). Between 1901 and 1905 there is a remarkable decline in the emigration figures.[3]

From these figures we may extract the following results. The population of Ireland has been reduced from nearly 8½ millions in 1846 to 4,402,182 inhabitants[4] in 1905. In sixty years, therefore, it has been almost halved. In 1801, England (including Wales) contained 8,892,536 inhabitants (153 per square mile), Scotland contained 1,608,420 (54 per square mile), and Ireland 5,395,456 (166 per square mile). But in 1901 we find the English population estimated at 32,526,075 (about 558 per square mile), that of Scotland at 4,472,103 (about 150 per square mile), and that of Ireland at 4,458,775 (about 137 per square mile). In a hundred years Scotland and England have more than trebled their population, while Ireland has seen hers reduced by over one-sixth. Ireland, in 1801, contained 34 per cent. of the population of the United Kingdom. In 1901 she can claim no more than 10½ per cent.

When we take account of the ages as well as of the numbers of these emigrants, we find that 90.6 per cent.

3 *Census of Ireland*, 1901, *General Report*, p. 73, 74, 168. Grimshaw, *op. cit.*, I., p. 60, Table of Statistics. In 1902 there were 40,190 emigrants. In 1903 there were 39,789. In 1904, 36,902. In 1905, 31,172.

The decline in the figures is due to the various efforts initiated during the last fifteen years, for the purpose of reconstituting agricultural life by means of co-operation, and for establishing an industrial renaissance in the Irish towns. It is, moreover, the result of the land laws, which have brought a sense of security and ownership to the tenant purchasers, and simultaneously a new spirit of confidence and hope. (*Cf.* above, p. 265, and below p. 424, etc.). The Emigration Statistics are, however, incomplete, inasmuch as they do not give the number of young men of the middle classes who go to England, or to the Colonies or America, to follow careers in journalism, in the law, in the medical profession, in politics or in the public service. Ireland is a nursery which supplies men for the liberal professions throughout the whole British Empire. The following fact may be taken as typical:—the Irish Universities educate nearly three times as many doctors as are required in Ireland. From the topmost rung of the ladder to the lowest, Irish education is "organised with a view to exportation," in the words of Dr. Douglas Hyde. (*Royal Commission on University Education, Evidence*, I., 145, and III., p. 312, 313.

4 Official estimate for 1905. *Cf. Census* of 1901.

are over 10 and under 45 years old ; and 80.4 per cent. are over 15 and under 35. It is the old people who remain in Ireland, those who must unavoidably be a burden on the community. It is the young and strong who go ; the young men and women who would be a profit instead of a loss to the country, the flower and the hope of the nation. Emigration takes the best. It is an inverted form of natural selection, which, as far as Ireland is concerned, results in the survival of the unfittest.[5]

Whence do they come, and whither do they go—these emigrants from every corner of Ireland, who are brought twice a week by special trains to Cork and to its port of embarkation, Queenstown ? In the first place, where do they go to ? In the old days, in the seventeenth century, they used to go to the land of brave exploits and military glory, to France. Nowadays they go to the land of business, America. 89.4 per cent go to the United States, 6.4 per cent. to Great Britain, 2 per cent. to Australia, 1.5 per cent. to Canada. There is but little variation in the proportions.[6] Secondly, where do they come from ? As regards the part played in emigration by each of the four provinces, there have, on the contrary, been very noticeable variations. During the last sixty years (1841-1901) it is Ulster that has suffered least. Owing to the development of Belfast, the capital of the province, her returns of population show a diminution of but 33 per cent (in the country districts of Ulster the population has diminished as much as in the rest of Ireland). It is Munster and Connaught that are the greatest losers (55 and 57 per cent. respectively).[7] The progress of the scourge differs in each province. In Ulster and Leinster, that is to say in the North and East of Ireland, the decennial figures show a fairly regular decrease in the loss of inhabitants (except for a slight rise during the decade 1881-1891). During the years between

5 *Census* of 1901, 1903, p. 677.
6 *Census* of 1901.
7 *Census*, p. 169,170. Leinster has lost 41 per cent. of her population.

1841 and 1851 the returns of depopulation stood as high as 15.25 per cent. (Leinster) and 15.69 per cent. (Ulster). But for the period between 1891 and 1901 the proportion has fallen to 3.26 per cent. and 2.28 per cent. respectively.

In Munster and Connaught, that is to say throughout the South and West, the loss of population, having at first been very high, suddenly underwent a considerable reduction, after which the figures again rose, until, during the decade 1881-1891, they reached a higher level than ever before. This second rise was succeeded by a second fall, which, however, proceeded much more slowly than in the first instance, so that in these portions of Ireland the losses are still far higher than in the other half.[8] In short, the South and West take longer to empty than the East and North. This is easily explainable by the fact that it is the West and South-west (to which might be added the North-west) that contain the largest area of poverty-stricken country districts. Now, emigration is not entirely a voluntary matter. To become an emigrant one must first save up the price of a ticket and also the small amount of capital required of intending immigrants into America. Besides which, morally speaking, a man must have risen a degree or two above his neighbour before he feels a desire to emigrate. He must have emerged from the doubt and despair around him, and have become imbued with the wish to rise and to try his fortune. Thus, even at the present day, certain districts of the extreme West, some of the most poverty-stricken in Ireland, are those from which there is least emigration. In the County of Kerry, for instance, from the districts of Dingle and Cahirciveen, there is hardly

[8] In 1841-1851 the losses amounted to 22.47 per cent. in Munster and 28.81 per cent. in Connaught. In the following decade they amounted only to 18.53 and 9.59 per cent. For the decade 1891-1901, the loss still remains as high as 8.20 per cent. (Munster), and 10.08 per cent. (Connaught). There are still 8 counties out of 32 in which the annual losses amount to over 17 per 1,000 of the population—all these counties being in the South or West of Ireland. There are 3 in which the annual rate is over 20 per 1,000 (Kerry, Galway, Clare). V. *Census*, 74, 169, 170.

any outflow of population, whereas there is a very high average of emigrants from Kenmare and Killarney, which are more "civilised."

The next question is: What are the causes of emigration? No problem in the world is apparently so simple, or in reality so complex. What is clear, however, is that there is no single and unique cause to be assigned for Irish emigration, any more than there is one single remedy to be named as its cure. Emigration is the result of a combination or succession of causes, resulting from the existing economic, social, political and moral conditions.

The English have in many cases brought themselves to regard Irish emigration as a natural phenomenon not only necessary, but even beneficial. Being extremely "over-populated," Ireland had to be "depopulated" before she could resume her economic equilibrium. In this case, they say, there is no need to invoke the finger of God; we need only refer for the explanation to the law of Malthus. You surely would not wish ever again to see in Ireland a population of eight or nine millions, such as she contained at the time of the Great Famine, of which over-population was the principal cause? But to these arguments the answer is: Why not, provided that we have enough industries to give employment, and that our land is properly apportioned? Ireland was overpopulated in former days only because she could not provide enough work for her inhabitants. Undoubtedly the clearances, agrarian oppression, and the lack of industries were the original causes of emigration. But why does the movement still go on? Why is it that even at the present day the high average of losses still continues?[9]

This, say the English, is merely a case of a universal

9 Ireland in 1901 sent out one emigrant for every 114 of her inhabitants; Norway sent out 1 for every 205; Italy, 1 for every 212; Scotland, 1 for every 214; Portugal, 1 for every 241; Spain, 1 for every 261; and Belgium, 1 for every 267. The other countries show less than one emigrant to every 400 inhabitants.

and inevitable phenomenon, namely, the rural exodus. True, it is replied, but with this difference: Whereas in other countries it is only migration. in Ireland it is emigration. Our towns are in America! say the Irish. This is far more than merely "a rural exodus." Here we are face to face with the unprecedented fact that in all classes, from the highest to the lowest, men and women are fleeing the country as in the old days they fled before the Black Death or the plagues of Egypt. The birthplace of a whole race is being laid desolate. Soon, unless fate changes her course, that birth-place will have become a tomb, beside the shrine of which there will no longer be gathered, even to pour out their prayers for her, those who were once the sons and daughters of Erin. They will be lost, scattered throughout the continents, these exiles for whom the remembrance of the old Motherland formed a bond of union in all parts of the world, and who, when she is dead, will no longer even remember that they are brothers.

The present causes of Irish emigration do not arise merely out of her agrarian and rural difficulties. It is not solely though it is perhaps chiefly due to the lack of national industries and of trade. It is due to the general destitution, aggravated by heavy taxation. It results from the narrowness of life and the lack of openings. "You can't rise in Ireland," that is the dominant feeling. An equal amount of work does not produce equal results. In order to succeed you must begin by leaving the country. "To get up you must get out first." Finally, misgovernment and political oppression are the keystone of the situation. Surely it is a natural desire for the Irish to aspire towards a state of things in which the law, be it as hard as the law in America, is at all events the same for all? The Irish will always regard the United States as above all others the land of liberty; and they will always bear graven on their hearts those words of John Stuart Mill: "When the inhabitants of a country quit the country *en masse* because its government will

not make it a place fit for them to live in, that government is judged and condemned." [10]

There is one last cause of emigration, that is to say, emigration itself. Emigration engenders emigration. The more the peasants emigrate, the more is social life destroyed in the country districts; hence a fresh reason for emigrating. Inversely, the greater the number of Irish in America, the more complete is the social life they find in their new home; this is a new factor in the emigration problem. During the last twenty years a deep change has taken place in Irish feeling as regards going to America. America has become their second native land, and emigration one of their customs. Many people live in the hopes of seeing or in the regret of never having seen that land of promise, America. Children are brought up with the idea of probably becoming emigrants; trained to regard life "in the country" as a transitory matter, merely a period of waiting until the time shall come for them to begin life "over there." Ireland, according to the proverb, is "a Purgatory, where the Irish must suffer in patience before going to America." To go to America no longer conveys the same idea of exile or expatriation. One may be as much at home in New Ireland as in the "old country." An emigrant who was asked why he was going to New York replied, "because it is nearer." [11] He knew that he would feel less strange and less isolated from his own family in America than in a neighbouring county of his native land. There is hardly a family in Ireland that does not number among its relatives and friends some who are now on the other side of the Atlantic. And those who have gone frequently persuade those left behind to follow them, often, indeed, paying their passage beforehand; 38 per cent. of the boat-tickets are forwarded in this manner from America.[12] Another symptom—among those who are

[10] *Political Economy*, Book II., Chapter X., paragraph 1.
[11] Cited by Sir Horace Plunkett in *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 56.
[12] The figure supplied by the Registrar-General.

going one no longer finds the despair which in former days was so dreadful to see; there is no longer the same heart-rending depression They go, not, of course, with happiness in their faces, but with resignation and resolution, and with the feeling, a cheerful feeling, perhaps new to them, of hope in their hearts.

Side by side, then, with forced emigration, there has come into being a current of voluntary emigration. This I believe to be a very grave sign as regards the future of the country. It is an indication of the power of this movement which, in spite of decreased numbers, retains a singularly strong hold on the people. As yet it shows no sign of being near its end, although it must inevitably bring Ireland to ruin and annihilation. For on the one hand, the emigrants are forever lost to the Mother Country. In the United States no immigrant becomes Americanised more quickly than the Irishman. True, the Irish-Americans do not forget the old country. Year after year they send over to Ireland vast sums of money, the amount of which has been estimated at an average of almost a million sterling for good and bad seasons alike.[13] But very few, indeed, return to Ireland.[14] On the other hand there is a corollary to Irish emigration, namely the British plantation of Ireland, the silent invasion of Ireland by the English and Scotch, who in commerce, industry, and public services are gradually taking the place of the natives. More and more, every year, the Anglo-Saxon, with his capital and his practical turn of mind, comes over to "work Ireland for all she is worth," as a business investment. If the Irish are not careful, the day will come when they will see themselves

[13] O'Rourke, *History of the Great Irish Famine*, p. 504. Mulhall, the statistician, writing in 1886, estimated the remittances from America at 32 millions sterling since 1851. According to Lord Dufferin, 13 millions were sent over during the 17 years that followed the Great Famine.

[14] Recent statistics seem to show that the number of Irish-Americans who visit Ireland for a holiday each year is very high, and that a large number of persons returned as emigrants from Ireland are in reality those who are going back again to America after a few weeks spent in their native land.

dispossessed and treated as strangers in their own native land. The revolution that Cromwell dared not complete with the sword seems on the verge of being accomplished by pacific methods. While Ireland is being depopulated of the Irish, she is being gradually peopled with Anglo-Saxons.[15]

V.—The Final Phase of Decay.

One often hears it maintained that those whom the emigrants leave behind them in the Motherland are raised to a better position by the Exodus, and that the blood-letting is producing, or has already produced, some healthy results in the social organism. Those who go, so it is said, leave more room for the others, and open up a wider field for their neighbours ; and in this manner the struggle for life is alleviated for everyone. But the facts, unfortunately, do not seem to corroborate this view. That for twenty years after the Great Famine there should have been some amelioration in the conditions of life of the poorer peasantry is probable enough.[1] But pauperism as a whole has decreased but little, if indeed it has decreased at all. The daily average of persons receiving relief in 1852-3 was 2.13 per 1,000 of the population. In 1862-63 the proportion had fallen to 1.12 per 1,000. Since then it has constantly risen, and has never, since 1882, fallen below 2 per 1,000. In

[15] During the last few years Ireland has realised the danger and has entered upon a vigorous struggle against the scourge of emigration. The " Extremists " were the first to open the campaign. An Anti-Emigration Society was recently formed, with agents in America, who endeavour, by means of judicious propaganda, to discourage emigration by setting forth the dangers and difficulties that await emigrants, and the over-crowding of the non-specialist labour market in the United States, etc. The Catholic clergy play an active part in this movement for national defence. Nowadays the cry is not merely " Ireland for the Irish " ; it must also be " the Irish for Ireland."

[1] On this point see the answers of Mr. H. A. Robinson, Commissioner of Local Government, in the *Evidence* before the *Financial Relations Commission*, I., p. 79.

1893-94 it was 2.17 per 1,000 ; [2] and on this point we may quote other figures as well. In 1885 the workhouses admitted 320,550 persons in Ireland. In 1900 the number had risen to 363,977 ; in the year 1901 the figure was 321,035.[3] In 1885 there were 120,937 persons in receipt of out-door relief ; in 1900 there were 121,829, and in 1901 110,528. One Irishman out of every eleven lives on the rates.[4] In fact pauperism has scarcely diminished at all in Ireland ; some persons have even argued, with probability, that during the last thirty years it has increased.[5]

Together with pauperism and emigration must be

[2] *Ib.*, II., p. 198.

[3] *Thom's Official Directory*, 1903, p. 710.

[4] *Ib.* accurately speaking, 9 per cent. of the population.

[5] Lough, *England's Wealth Ireland's Poverty*, p. 163.
We may add that the condition of the Poor Law leaves much to be desired. Its chief unit of organisation in each of the 163 Unions is the workhouse, which is simultaneously an almshouse, a hospital, a childrens' asylum, a refuge for beggars, etc. It is usually an immense building, massive and sombre, with high walls like a prison, and standing on high ground so as to be visible for a long distance. On entering its precincts one finds half ruined buildings, sometimes abandoned for lack of money, redolent of poverty and decay. Most of them were built before the time of the Great Famine, and are, consequently, too big for the actual population of the country. That at Clifden, which was intended to accommodate 822 paupers, had only 90 inmates when we visited it. That at Westport had room for 1,100, but contained only 150 occupants. The salaries in connection with them absorb an undue proportion of the funds available. In the Union of Stranorlar they represent more than half the expenditure. (*Royal Commission on Local Taxation, Evidence*, V., p. 128 and 129). The board, lodging, and service of the nurses are neglected. Apart from the workhouses, the Poor Law Guardians (who are now amalgamated with the District Councils) distribute out-door relief (usually one-and-sixpence a week per individual). No out-door relief is allowed to tenants of over quarter of an acre of land (which prevents most of the peasants obtaining any). Finally, we may add, that besides the district dispensaries, there are county hospitals, lunatic asylums, etc., and that, in the towns, much is done by private charity. A Commission of Enquiry was appointed in 1905 to consider what reforms are necessary in the Poor Law of Ireland. The conclusions formulated in its report may be summarised as recommending :—1. That children, dealt with under the Poor Law, should be boarded-out in families instead of being kept in the workhouses. 2. That tramps should be detained for longer or shorter terms in Houses of Labour. 3. That lunatics, consumptives, epileptics, and unmarried mothers should be kept in separate institutions. 4. That an almshouse for old people should be established in each county. 5. That the *Quarter Acre Clause* should be repealed.

chronicled a third great scourge of Ireland, namely alcoholism. Alcoholism, though a less serious evil than is commonly stated, is nevertheless more serious than is sometimes believed. True, the consumption of spirits per head does not reach so high a figure as in England.[6] But the following symptoms give cause for anxiety. Firstly, the number of licensed houses. In 1905 there were about 30,000 of them, say one for every 146 inhabitants.[7] In Dublin there are 1,551 public-houses; in Belfast 1,110; in Tralee 117 public-houses for 9,367 inhabitants, say 1 for every 80; in Castleisland there is 1 for every 30 inhabitants; and in a certain village in Clare, called Mullogh, there are 10 public-houses to 179 inhabitants! Secondly, the social power that the publican—Bung, or King Bung, as he is popularly called—wields in public affairs. Thirdly, from a financial point of view, the heavy bill that Ireland has to pay, owing to her consumption of spirits. This amounts to no less than 14 or 15 millions sterling a year, of which more than 5 millions find their way to the Imperial Exchequer. Finally, not to mention the moral ruin resulting from alcoholism, we come to the physical harm worked on a race constitutionally and organically weakened by intense poverty and poor living, and consequently less able to stand stimulants than the Anglo-Saxons, those "strong machines for eating meat," as the Irish call them.

6 In 1892 the sums spent per head on alcohol and beer in Great Britain and in Ireland respectively, worked out as follows:—in Great Britain, £1 9s. on spirits; in Ireland, £1 6s. 6d. on spirits; in Great Britain, £2 13s. on beer; in Ireland, £1 7s. 2d. on beer. (*Financial Relations Commission, Final Report*, p. 183). It is unnecessary to attach very great importance to the returns of convictions for drunkenness; they are subject to considerable variations, according to the customs of each country and the zeal of the police.

7 In 1845 there were only 15,000 public-houses for 8,295,061 inhabitants, or 1 for 550 inhabitants. *Cf.* the *Report of the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing*, 1899. In the United Kingdom, of course, the licensing of houses is in the hands of J.P's. There is no doubt that some of them, whether from favouritism or incapacity to say no, grant far too many licences. In 1905 there were 24,119 licensed houses. (V. *Ireland Revenue Returns*, 1905).

A weakened and exhausted race—this is the ultimate conclusion of every diagnosis of Ireland's maladies. This is the ultimate and fatal result of all the ordeals, all the losses, whether economic, social or racial, which, during the last hundred years—not to go further into past history—have fallen one after another upon her.

What are the symptoms of this decadence in the race ? In the first place an abnormal and extreme reduction in the rate of births (23 per 1,000) and of marriages (4.8 per 1,000), which have been declining ever since 1865, when the first statistics were drawn up (we may note a slight upward tendency during the last few years.[8]

In former days Ireland was renowned for numerous families and early marriages. English economists, disciples of Malthus, were very ready to attribute Irish poverty to the improvident marriages of a race which has always shown itself prolific. But Ireland now has the lowest birth-rate and the lowest marriage-rate in Europe. In these respects she is even a little below France. True, the death-rate also is low (18.2 per 1,000),[9] but it shows a noticeable upward tendency (the rate was only 16.7 in 1865). The annual excess of births over deaths, which in England stands at 11.7, and in Scotland at 11.8 per 1,000, in Ireland only amounts to 5.5 per 1,000 of the population.[10]

In the following phenomenon we have another grave sign of racial decadence : I mean the marked increase of mental disease during the last fifty years. In 1851 Ireland had 5,074 lunatics and 4,906 imbeciles making a total

[8] *Census*, 1901. *General Report*, p. 74. Grimshaw, *op. cit.* Table I. A birth-rate of 23 per 1,000 is given by the *Census* for the years 1891-1901. The rate for 1903 is 23.1, and for 1904 is 23.6 per 1,000. This low birth-rate results from the small number of marriages in Ireland (a result of emigration) ; for the marriages are more fruitful in Ireland than in England. Taking the year 1904, if we divide the number of births by that of marriages, we obtain an average of 4.5, in England an average of 3.7, and in Scotland an average of 4.1. (*Statistical Abstract for the United Kingdom*, 1905, p. 286). The lowest birth-rates in Europe are :—23.3 in France ; 28.6 in Switzerland ; 29.3 in Belgium.

[9] *Census*, p. 74.

[10] *Statistical Abstract*, 1905, p. 286.

of 9,980 persons of unsound mind, or 1.52 per 1,000 of the population. In 1901 she has 19,834 lunatics and 5,216 imbeciles, or a total of no less than 25,050, say 5.61 per 1,000, whereas in England there are only 4.07, and in Scotland 4.53 per 1,000.[11] Attempts have been made to discover local or special causes for the sad prevalance of mental disease. Some have specified alcohol, or the over-use of tea, especially tea that has been left to stew, according to the custom of the Irish peasant. Others denounce the dullness of life in the pastoral districts, the isolation, the physical inaction and intellectual void amid which the peasants drag out their lives on the cattle-breeding *latifundia*. And here, indeed, we have a fact worth noting, namely, that it is in the district more especially devoted to grazing, namely, Munster, that the percentage of the mentally unsound reaches its highest level (6.57 per 1,000). The counties in Ireland most subject to the scourge are Waterford, Meath, Clare, Kilkenny, King's County, Tipperary, Wexford,[12] all of them cattle-grazing districts. On the other hand, it is the towns, Belfast, Dublin, and Londonderry, in which the smallest proportion of mental disease is to be found.[13] But such subsidiary causes as these cannot overshadow the true fundamental and essential cause, namely, the degeneration of the race caused by extreme poverty and emigration.

Thus, according to all appearance, Ireland is dying of consumption; she is already condemned. For too many years she has been "bled white"; the germs of

[11] *Census*, p. 46. As regards physical infirmities and defects, Ireland is also in a far worse condition than Great Britain. Ireland contains 1,135 blind people per million inhabitants, England contains 809, and, Scotland 695. Ireland contains 715 dear-mutes per million inhabitants, England 489, Scotland 528. (*Financial Relations Commission, Evidence*, II., p. 209, 210).

[12] *Census*, p 46. The rate varies from 9.61 to 6.81 per 1,000.

[13] *Cf.* Lord Dunraven, *The Crisis in Ireland*, p. 6. An Anglo-Irish Protestant, Mr. Filson Young, author of *Ireland at the Cross-roads* (London, 1904, p. 117, etc.), believes that the true cause of the increase in mental disease is Roman Catholicism, the dominant religion in Ireland. We merely quote the fact in order to show how far prejudice may carry some minds in anti-Celticism and anti-Catholicism.

the disease have too deeply penetrated her system for any effectual treatment by the partial and insufficient measures which England has sought to apply during the last thirty years. Agrarian Reform, Local Government, and like palliatives cannot effectively stay the progress of the evil; they merely create an atmosphere of illusion. According to all appearance, Ireland, in so far as she is the Irish nation, distinct from England, must die. The end seems to be near. It is now only a matter of years, or even days. It would be possible to calculate mathematically the date when the last Irish emigrant will take his departure from Ireland; when the Celt will have vanished from Ireland, and the Emerald Isle will at last have become English!

These would be the conclusions arrived at by an economist who had only studied, as we have hitherto only studied, the material and external phenomena of the social organism of Ireland. But will he arrive at the same conclusion when he has reached the stage, not merely of examining figures, statistics, and Acts of Parliament, but of entering into moral and psychological forces and their power of reaction on the life of the nation? On this point we shall be able to form an opinion when, passing beyond the statics, we have in the third part of this work enquired into the dynamics of the Irish question.

PART III.

POSSIBILITIES OF REGENERATION

CHAPTER I.—THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

In social life material facts are dominated and controlled by moral forces. Indeed, as Matthew Arnold said to the Americans, it is moral forces that in the end determine whether a nation is to conquer or to perish. Nothing throws so much light on our subject as this truth. The Irish question is to-day above all a question of mind and character. If Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century is in a condition of decadence, the true reason for this, putting aside the question of English oppression, is the mental and moral decadence of the nation. Imagine the impossible. Suppose the political and economic grievances of Ireland to be suddenly and wholly redressed. Ireland is still lost, if she does not re-make her soul. Suppose inversely, that by an effort from within, Ireland should one day regain her spiritual integrity ; on that day she is saved. The material regeneration of Ireland becomes possible through her moral or rather her psychological regeneration ; it is indeed possible only by this means ; and in it we have at once hope and a future open to the Irish.

Ireland's greatest danger, therefore, lies in her mental

and moral decadence, and let me say at once that this decadence is to a great extent the fruit of oppression. I have already spoken of the effect which the Penal Laws of the eighteenth century produced on Ireland. Following as they did upon many centuries of war and massacre, and aided in all their work by emigration, they brought Ireland to a state of extreme exhaustion. England thoroughly understood what she was doing; she struck at the brain of Ireland; "demoralised" her, sacked and ruined the national mind.

The fatalism, the lethargy, the moral inertia and intellectual passivity, the general absence of energy and character, of method and discipline, which we remark in the Ireland of to-day, are to be ascribed to this cause. Psychologically and materially, Ireland has seen all her worth and substance drained away, until nothing of any value is left to her. I have also noticed how the effects of the Penal Laws have been perpetuated until the present day by English oppression, by the land system, by commercial subjection, by those thousand bonds of slavery which, like the serpent of the Laocoon, encompass and stifle Ireland. But this is not all. Mental and moral slavery has been perpetuated in yet another way, that is to say, by means of one of the worst systems of education ever devised; a system so bad that if England had wished to "kill Ireland's soul" when she imposed it upon the Sister Isle, she could not have discovered a better means of doing so. It is necessary to stop here for a moment in order to show by an examination of the outlines of the Irish system of education, how Ireland, who might have found her salvation in her schools, has, throughout the nineteenth century, only found in them a new element of decadence. How shall I describe the public education of Ireland?[1] A university system, which is anti-national,

[1] On the subject of Irish education see Cardinal Perraud *op. cit.*: II. p. 305 *et. seq.* Graham Balfour, *Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland*, Oxford 1898. Barry O'Brien, *Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland*, vol. II. *passim*. *Report of the Royal Commission (Powis Commission) on Irish Primary Education*, 1870 (9 vols), *Report*

and practically closed to Catholics ; a bad primary and a worse secondary system ; no single central and competent authority, but independent " Boards " of irresponsible amateurs ; an education which forms neither intellect nor character ; a programme of instruction almost entirely mechanical and for examination purposes, and denuded, on principle, of everything that would make for nationality ; little or no disinterested study or culture ; and finally, a public opinion which manifests but little zeal and little competence in educational matters.

First, as to Primary Education. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, national and Catholic Ireland had, in spite of the Penal Laws, succeeded in creating a number of fairly good primary and secondary schools, either descendants of the " hedge-schools " of the eighteenth century, or the work of religious orders lately founded, such as the Christian Brothers, the Brothers of St. Patrick, the Sisters of Charity, and others.[2] These schools were, however, quite insufficient for the needs of the country, and received nothing from the State, which had under Elizabeth and James I. lavishly endowed the Protestant proselytising schools with which Ireland was covered. The State still subsidized these schools liberally,[3] but

of the Recess Committee, 1896. *Report of the Belmore Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction*, 1898. *Report of the Commission on Intermediate Education in Ireland*, 1899. *Report of the Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland*, 1903. Two *Reports* by Mr. Dale, School Inspector, on Primary and Secondary Education in Ireland. 1904. Starkie, *Recent Reforms in Irish Education*, Dublin. 1902. (*Cf.* Dr. O'Riordan's reply to this pamphlet). *Cf.* F. Hugh O'Donnell's *Ruin of Education in Ireland*, London, 1903. See also the Annual Reports of the Board of National Education, the Board of Intermediate Education, and the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

2 In many of these schools Latin and Greek were taught ; Ireland had then a large number of scholars enjoying a great local reputation (*Cf.* Balfour, *op.* : *cit.* : p. 83). The Christian Brothers' Order was founded in 1802, by Ignatius Rice, for the purpose of giving to the children of the poor a Catholic education. It possesses 302 schools, both primary and secondary, with 30,000 pupils. The education it gives is the best to be had in Ireland. The Institute of the Brothers of Saint Patrick dates from 1808.

3 Elizabeth in 1570 had created the *Diocesan Free Schools*. James I. followed her example and founded the *Royal Free Schools* in Ulster in 1608. The *Erasmus Smith Schools* were established in the seventeenth century with funds bequeathed by a Cromwellian. All

their ineffectiveness, the abuses to which they gave rise, and the scandal which finally attached to them, at length induced the British Government to impose upon Ireland a system of education called, no doubt ironically, "national," a foreign system opposed to the aptitudes and to the sentiments of the nation. Such was the object of the Act of 1831, the work of Stanley (Lord Derby), and its first practical result was the disappearance of the greater part of the old Catholic Schools of Ireland.

The new system was dominated by two principles, both of which are inspired by those doctrines of so-called "liberalism" and "neutrality," which England rejected for herself and yet wished to impose on the Sister Isle. The first principle is that the schools shall be "mixed," that is to say, shall be attended by pupils of all denominations. Very soon, however, this first principle became inoperative, Presbyterians and Episcopalians refusing to be bound by it no less positively than Catholics.[4] Almost everywhere the schools organised themselves according to distinct denominations, a circumstance which has led to an excessive multiplication of small and inefficient schools.[5] The second principle is that of "neutrality." Religious instruction is only given outside school hours, and given separately to members of each denomination. This second principle has survived in spite of the check sustained by the first; consequently, in exclusively Catholic or Protestant schools it is forbidden,

these schools, richly endowed, were, as a matter of fact, reserved for Protestants. In the eighteenth century the Protestants began to aim directly at proselytising Catholic children; with this object the *Charter Schools* were founded in 1782, and still enjoy enormous revenues. There was soon an efflorescence of proselytising foundations; schools belonging to the *Association for Discountenancing Vice* (founded in 1800); schools of the *London Hibernian Society* (founded in 1805); and schools of the *Kildare Place Society* (1811); (these last working under cover of a fictitious neutrality) all largely subsidised by the Government. (*Cf.* Balfour, *op. cit.*: p. 82).

4 Nowhere is the separation more complete than in Ulster. *Cf.* Mr. Dale's *Report* on Primary Education pp. 34, etc.

5 The schools attended by both Catholics and Protestants number 2,762,out of 8,659 (*Report* of the Commissioners of National Education. for 1905-6, p. 30). The multiplication of small schools has been favoured by the system in force of payment of teachers. (Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 4, 42).

even now, to teach religion in school hours, to read the Bible, or to hang crosses or crucifixes on the walls. Be it Protestant or Catholic in fact, the school must remain officially neutral, and hence we find on the part of the teachers an inclination to subterfuge and compromise, and on the part of the pupils a tendency to scepticism and indifference.[6]

Each school is under the supervision of a local administrator or "manager." In Catholic schools he is usually the priest, the only well-informed man in the village.[7] The manager administers and controls the school, and appoints or dismisses the teachers.[8] The State, on the other hand, pays either all or a part of the building expenses, and all the teachers' salaries.[9] In return, it regulates the instruction given, draws up the programmes, arranges the methods of teaching, controls the books, inspects the schools, the pupils, and the teachers. The State? That is to say, the Board of

6 Balfour, *op. cit.* p. 92, 94; *cf.* p. 118.

7 As in many parts of England (*Cf.* Dale, *op. cit.*, p. 45). The manager must be approved by the Board, which can withdraw its approbation in case of necessity and after inquiry. (Rule No. 50). The manager is not a "director" with adequate powers, but an "administrator" having charge of the general management.

8 The teachers may also be dismissed by the Board. Only laymen are eligible. There are about 12,000 teachers of primary schools in Ireland.

9 The State only gives grants for the building of schools when the sites and a third of the building expenses are supplied from local sources. It formerly insisted that it should be recognised as legal owner of the school, but now permits the property to be vested in trustees approved by it. The repairs are usually paid for by the managers. The system of the payment of teachers has been frequently altered. In the beginning the teacher received the school fees, plus a capitation grant paid by the State. This latter was replaced, in 1841, by a salary varying according to certain classes. In 1872 "results fees" were added to the fixed payments, these fees varying according to results at examinations. In 1892 the school fees were suppressed. Finally, in 1900, the remuneration of the teacher was as follows:—Firstly, a salary according to rank; secondly, an increase according to seniority; thirdly, a fixed sum of five shillings per pupil; fourthly, fees for extra subjects taught outside school hours or at evening classes. This new system has evoked complaints from the teachers to the effect that they are thereby reduced to the direst poverty. They seem to me, however, to be well paid in comparison with their French colleagues. But the career, certainly, does not attract many, and the number of candidates for it is diminishing.

National Education, sitting in Dublin, and composed of twenty unpaid members, nominated by the Government. A paid Resident Commissioner, with the help of his Secretaries, does practically all the work.[10] Let me say finally, that there are at present in Ireland 8,659 primary schools working under the Act of 1831, and under the authority of the Board,[11] that the Board spends annually a sum of about £1,300,000; and that there are also a fairly large number of primary schools, independent and ecclesiastical,—managed by the Christian Brothers, by the Presentation Brothers of St. Patrick, or by nuns,—which have never received a penny from the State, are therefore free from control by the Board, and have a higher standard of education than the others.

This highly specialised organisation does not work well. The authority which pays has power only to make rules, and it does this with so much energy that it loses itself in the maze of its own rules and regulations. It draws up detailed programmes, of the narrowest and most rigid character, all based on English ideas and blind to National idosyncracies, and all inspired by the aim expressed by Dr. Whately, one of the first Commissioners, of making every Irish pupil a "happy English child." The history of Ireland is proscribed; so also is all reference

[10] On the religious war of the Board of National Education, see Perraud, *op. cit.*, p. 325, etc. The Board usually consists, with some ecclesiastics, of well-known laymen, judges, Trinity College Professors, etc. The members attend the meetings very irregularly.

[11] *Report of the Commissioners of National Education for* 1905-6, p. 24. In this number are comprised some 30 *Model Schools*, managed by the Board itself, and consequently dependent only upon it. These schools were originally founded for the purpose of raising the standard of education, bringing the methods of teaching to perfection, and training the teachers. In reality the education given in them, while a little better than that of the average so-called National Schools, is inferior to that given by the free schools under the management of monks or nuns. They cost enormous sums and are only used by the children of the Protestant lower middle classes, whom they educate for nothing. The Board's extravagance with regard to these *Model Schools* is in singular contrast with its parsimony towards other schools, and consequently Nationalist opinion in Ireland never ceases to demand the suppression of the *Model Schools*. "These schools are almost the worst imposture to be found in Ireland," said Lord Randolph Churchill in 1884. (*Cf.* Dale's Report, p. 93, etc.).

to Catholicism, and all Irish songs[12]—a strange method of attracting children to school! There is nothing to educate either eyes or hands; it is only necessary for a child to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic. All such thing as object lessons, or manual and practical instruction are ignored.[13] The children ask for bread, as a professor of Trinity College said, and they are given educational stones. In order to raise the level of instruction, it was arranged in 1872 to pay at least some of the teachers "by results," that is to say, by the results of examinations, a system which England herself had already abandoned. This system has tended to make the methods of teaching too mechanical, and to awaken a somewhat mercenary inclination on the part of the teachers.[14]

One-half[15] of the teachers to-day have had no special education for their profession; and the training supplied to future teachers by the State Training Colleges, or even by the free Training Colleges subsidised by the State since 1883 is poor enough.[16]

Finally, education is not compulsory, except in certain towns which have adopted the Act of 1892, an Act which provides that education may be declared obligatory by the local authorities in boroughs and counties.[17] The

12 See Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 97. Dr. Whately had erased from the lesson-books the quotation: "Freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell" (*Ib.* p. 97). I shall return later to the war declared by the National Board on the Gaelic language and national history.

13 The Commission of 1898 on Manual and Practical Instruction declares (*Report*, p. 6) that children leave the primary schools incapable of entering technical schools, even were there any at their disposal. *Cf.* Starkie, *Recent Reforms in Irish Education*, p. 18. Dale's *Report*, p. 91.

14 Starkie, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

15 In 1883 only a third of the teachers had received any special preparation; in 1902 the proportion was 55 per 100. *Cf.* Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 109. Dale's *Report*, p. 17.

16 The State maintains two *Training Colleges* at Dublin, with the *Model Schools*, which partly serve to prepare the teachers. On the other hand, both Catholics and Protestants have free *Training Colleges*, authorised in 1883. These establishments are subsidised by the Board, but very inadequately. (Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 110).

17 Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 111, etc. In 86 towns out of 117, and in 15 counties out of 32, attendance has been declared obligatory, and School Attendance Committees have been formed, but the action of these committees is very feeble and scarcely efficacious. (Starkie, *op. cit.* p. 23).

average attendance at school is, in fact, very low; it amounts to but 65 per cent. of those entered on the school rolls, as against 83.9 per cent. in England.[18]

The consequence of all this is, that the child, who, as Wordsworth says, "is father to the man," is badly formed, or as some say, positively deformed by the so-called National Schools. "In fifty years," wrote Colonel Moore, a short time ago, "they have turned the quickest and most intelligent race in Europe into the most helpless and the most useless."[19]

The managers throw the blame on the Board, that arbitrary, anti-National, and incompetent central authority which holds the purse and starves the schools. The Board retaliates by accusing the managers of negligence and indifference in educational matters, and of incapacity in the exercise of powers which are not accompanied by any financial responsibility.[20] The proper solution, people tell you, would be to place educational authority and financial responsibility in the same hands; to levy local rates for education, and above all, to establish a central authority which would have both the power and the ability needed for effective administration. The misfortune is that such an authority would be anti-national, and thus politically and religiously suspect, so long as Ireland is not mistress of her own government. Whether you will or no, politics always re-appear in the *Cosas de Irlanda*.

We next turn to Secondary Education. Thirty years ago the Catholics, with a very small number of schools,

[18] Dale's *Report*, p. 53. Starkie (*op. cit.* p. 21, note 1) gives 63·0 per 100 in Ireland and 82.4 per 100 in England. *Cf. Census* of 1901. *General Report*, p. 70.

[19] *Freeman's Journal*, 6th February, 1903. It is only fair to say that the number of individuals who can neither read nor write has gone down from 53 per 100 (in 1841) to 14 per 100 (in 1901). *Census* of 1901. *General Report*, p. 57.

[20] See the above-mentioned works of Starkie and O'Riordan. The Parliamentary Vote in aid of primary education is most assuredly insufficient; statistics prepared in 1906 by the Irish National Teachers' Association show that a sum of 7s. 4d. per inhabitant is given for this purpose in England, 7s. 7d. in Scotland, and 6s. 5d. in Ireland.

none of which were subsidised by the State, were unable to compete in this respect with the Protestants, who had long enjoyed richly endowed secondary schools. These endowments were often abused. "Quality bad, quantity insufficient," said Lord Cairns in 1871 of the "intermediate" education of Ireland. Out of a population of five and a half millions, only 10,814 young people were then learning either living or dead languages. In order to remedy this state of affairs a sum of one million sterling was granted in 1871 for the purposes of secondary education. This sum was drawn from the Church Fund, which had accrued from the Disestablishment of the Irish Church.[21] In 1878 a Board for Intermediate Education was created, analogous to the National Board, and with power to allocate the grants (of which the annual total is to-day [22] about £60,000 per year) amongst existent or prospective secondary schools.

These schools, now fairly numerous, remain private and free.[23] No control is exercised over the use made of the grants; a system of academic inspection was organised only in 1903, and it is even now very incomplete. In the Catholic schools the masters are almost all ecclesiastics—laymen are more exacting in pecuniary matters—and these ecclesiastics have often a very insufficient classical and scientific training for their educational functions.[24] A third point: the grants are in proportion to the results obtained by each establishment at the annual examinations; consequently, the instruction given is even more mechanical, artificial and coloured by mercenary interests

[21] See later.

[22] £57,982 in 1904 (*Report of Intermediate Board for* 1904, p. 18).

[23] The same report mentions 275 secondary schools as sending up 8,530 pupils to the examinations (1904). The schools are, in general, too numerous, and consequently of too little importance separately. The Board of Education sits in Dublin, and consists of 12 members who give their services for nothing.

[24] This was the evidence of Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, before the Commission on University Education in Ireland in 1901 (*Appendix to First Report*, p. 21). He was speaking more especially of diocesan schools or seminaries; the standard of the schools kept by religious orders is far higher. Hardly ten per cent. of the teachers in secondary schools have university degrees. (Starkie, *op. cit.*, p. 29).

than in the primary schools.[25] Herein lies the triumph of "cramming." If there are in Ireland some schools in which conscientious school training is held in honour, there are also too many charlatan and cramming institutions, where the pupils are merely stuffed up with a view to examinations. Neither memory nor intelligence is cultivated. Not men, but parrots, are produced.[26] Moreover, one result is an "academical proletariat," that is to say, an army of *Hungerkandidaten*, who, for want of a proper system of higher education, are condemned to remain among the unclassed.

Higher education—the keystone of every educational system—in fact either does not exist, or is at least all but inaccessible to the majority of the nation, that is to say, to Catholics who remain loyal to their religion, and Nationalists who remain loyal to their country. "We have plenty of so-called universities in this country," Dr. Hyde (a Protestant), has said, "but we have none that meets our wants." [27]

There is first of all Trinity College, that great and celebrated Dublin University, rendered illustrious by so many famous names, Archbishops Ussher and Bedell, Burke and Grattan, the poet Moore and the great historian Lecky. Founded by Elizabeth in 1591 [28] in the very

25 There was not long since something analogous to this in the English public schools: see Matthew Arnold, *Irish Essays*, London 1882, p. 90-91.

26 See the *Report* and the *Evidence of the Commission on Intermediate Education*, Dublin, 1899. *Cf.* Starkie, *op. cit.*, p. 24-25 It is impossible to imagine how far this cramming, now soon to disappear, was formerly carried; it is said that French translation consisted in learning by heart the English translation, after which the teacher taught the children to distinguish the corresponding phrases in the texts, the words in each phrase, etc.

27 *Evidence* before the Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland (1901-1903). *Appendix to the Third Report* p. 314. The *Report* issued by this Commission, and the evidence collected by it, are both of the greatest importance in the study of higher education in Ireland. *Cf.* on the same subject the following works:—Most Rev. Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, *The Irish University Question*, Dublin, 1890, and *Irish University Question: The Catholic Case*, Dublin, 1897.

28 See the *History of Dublin University*, by Reverend Dr. Stubbs, Dublin, 1889. *The Constitutional History of the University of Dublin*

centre of the City of Dublin, on a site confiscated from a monastery; endowed from the start with large tracts of land, also confiscated from the Irish, Trinity College has since seen its resources increased by means of frequent grants and donations from the State, until to-day it is reputed to be the richest college in Europe; its net revenue, independently of students' fees, is about £45,000 per annum.[29] It possesses about one thousand students[30] of whom only a small number, contrary to the custom in English universities, reside within the walls. It is governed by a Provost, assisted by seven Senior Fellows.[31] But for an Irishman and a Catholic, what is this old university of which even the alumni of Oxford and Cambridge speak with contempt as "our silent sister?" It is a

by D. C. Heron, Dublin, 1847. *An Epoch in Irish History: Trinity College, Dublin, its foundation and early fortunes*, by J. P. Mahaffy, London, 1903. See the *Report* of the Royal Commission on the University of Dublin and Trinity College (President, Archbishop Whately), 1853. See also the *Report* recently published by the Royal Commission on Trinity College and Dublin University, 1906. See also Rev. J. F. Hogan, *Irish Catholics and Trinity College*. Dublin, 1906. Trinity College must not be confounded with Dublin University, of which Trinity College has always remained the only constituent college (see *Trinity College and the University of Dublin*, by the Archbishop of Dublin; Dublin, 1902). Both were founded by the same Charter in 1591, and up to the present they have remained indissolubly united; one of the solutions to the Irish University Question (a solution energetically opposed by Trinity College) would be the constitution, within Dublin University, of a second College acceptable to Catholics. The Charter of Elizabeth was modified by Charles I. in 1637, and more recently in 1855, as the result of an inquiry by a Royal Commission.

[29] Figures given by Dr. Anthony Traill, now Provost of Trinity College, before the University Commission of 1904. (*Appendix* to the *Third Report*, p. 208). Until recently, Trinity College was either direct or head landlord of almost 200,000 acres of Irish land, and was also said to have been a very hard landlord to the tenants. (One of the worst struggles in the time of the land war took place on the estate of Trinity College in County Kerry). The Land Act of 1903 gave Trinity College an annual sum of £5,000 out of the Irish Development Grant as compensation for eventual losses on the sale of her agrarian rights. Trinity College does not publish financial accounts.

[30] In 1901 there were 976. (Census, *General Report*, p. 65). The number of students is diminishing. There were 1,338 in 1881, and 1,162 in 1891 (*Ib.*).

[31] Dublin University, on the other hand, is governed by a Lord Chancellor, a Vice-Chancellor, and an elected Board (this last instituted in 1874). The "Senate" comprises all the Doctors and Masters of the University, under the Presidency of the Chancellor. Trinity College has, besides the Senior Fellows, 24 Junior Fellows (incorporated). *Cf.* Graham Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

foreign institution, imported by England for the use of the garrison, and remaining exclusively suited to the uses of this garrison. It is an official and professional establishment, with a narrow and utilitarian spirit, principally employed in the training of lawyers, doctors, Protestant clergymen and civil servants ; an establishment in which genuine thought and disinterested science are, no doubt, honoured, but in which they are certainly but little taught. Hence the Anglo-Irish gentry often prefer to send their sons to Oxford or Cambridge instead of to Dublin University. It is an establishment with a Protestant atmosphere and spirit, which calls itself non-sectarian[32] and boasts that it was the first in the Anglo-Saxon world to open its doors to Catholics and Nonconformists. Yet it was not till 1873 that it admitted non-Anglicans to Scholarships and Fellowships.[33] Moreover, it merely made a show of liberalism when its Protestant traditions were well established and indestructible, and it is only open in theory to the Catholics, as are their old churches which were taken from them at the Reformation and given over to the Protestants. Trinity College has been little frequented by the Catholics since 1875, when it was declared dangerous to faith and morals by the Synod of Maynooth.

It is a definitely anti-Irish establishment, separated from the rest of Ireland as if by the Great Wall of China. It has never exercised any influence on the country, except by means of reaction or "repulsion";[34] it is

[32] Within Trinity College there is a Divinity School where the clergymen of the Church of Ireland are educated. The present Provost, Dr. Traill, is a notorious anti-Catholic, as was his predecessor, Dr. Salmon (see the latter's book on the *Infallibility of the Church*).

[33] Since 1792 all religious tests at the enrolment of students have been abolished, but they were still compulsory on all Scholars and Fellows, these latter being, moreover, generally in orders. In 1840, celibacy ceased to be compulsory on the Fellows. Finally, in 1873, all religious tests (except for the Chair of Divinity) were abolished. (See Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 294-277).

[34] An expression of Sir Horace Plunkett's. (*Ireland in the New Century*, London, 1904, p. 137). Note the number of Irishmen educated at Trinity College who rebelled against this spirit : Swift, Grattan, Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, Thomas Davis, John Mitchel.

hostile to National ideas, to the Irish spirit, to the history of Ireland, and, even to those Celtic studies in which it should have taken a leading part.[35] Isolated in its grandeur as in that decadence which it shares to-day with the Irish Ascendancy, and with the Anglican Church of Ireland, it can never hope to rise from its present condition until it learns how to become a part of the country, and to renew and refresh itself at the sources of the nation's life.[36]

Is it thus extraordinary that Trinity College is so little frequented by young men who have remained faithful to the political and religious faith of Ireland? And, on the other hand, can one reasonably call the two Queen's Colleges of Cork and Galway centres of University Education? For the third Queen's College, the only one that shows any vitality, is practically reserved for the Presbyterian students of Ulster. Founded by Sir Robert Peel in 1845, these establishments were in 1850 incorporated into the Queen's University, with authority to grant degrees to students attending in the three colleges.[37] Thus, without interfering with Trinity College (an institution fundamentally connected with the Union) Peel had wished to satisfy the needs of the country by providing a University Education open to all ideas and to all men, that is to say, absolutely secular, or rather agnostic. Even the Protestants hastened to call it "godless." England upholds denominational education for herself. But why should not a purely secular education be quite good enough for Ireland? In reality Ireland has never

35 Trinity College possesses admirable Irish manuscripts, and has never done anything to make them useful.

36 Remark that there is at present at Trinity College an increasing nucleus of young Nationalists in the largest sense of the word. The separatist *United Irishman* has come to be read there of late.

37 The three Colleges opened their doors in 1849. Each received the necessary funds for the acquisition of land and the construction of buildings, plus an annual income of £7,000 from the Consolidated Fund. Boarding-houses for the accommodation of the students are approved of by the authorities of each College. Each College is governed by a President and by a Council composed of six members elected by the teaching staff. (See Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 282, etc.). *Report of Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland*, Dublin, 1903, p. 10, etc.

had any desire for the secular solution; the majority of Irishmen did not want the Queen's Colleges; and at the Synod of Thurles in 1850 the Catholic Church forbade priests to attend them, and advised laymen not to do so.[38] Since that date the two Colleges at Cork and Galway, lacking means, masters and students, have had great difficulty in maintaining their existence.[39] At the same time they suffered another defeat through the creation of the Catholic University. In 1850 the Irish Episcopate decided, with a Papal Charter, to establish this University in Dublin on the model of the University of Louvain. It opened auspiciously in 1854, under the government of a body of Bishops,[40] and with the future Cardinal Newman as Rector. But it was doomed in advance. Want of money (for the country was too poor, and the State refused to grant any subsidy), want of students (secondary education not having been developed),[41] want of adequate powers (more especially of the power of conferring degrees) combined to bring it to an early end. Yet some part of it still remains, namely, that splendid Catholic institution,[42] University College, Dublin, which inherited the buildings formerly belonging to the Catholic

[38] See later.

[39] In 1901 Belfast College had 354 students; Cork, 171; Galway 97. (Census, *General Report*, p. 65). Out of a total of 622 students, there are only 159 Catholics. Queen's College, Cork, is little more than a School of Medicine. (*Cf.* Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 284).

[40] From 1851 to 1865 voluntary subscriptions to the amount of £125,000 were received for the Catholic University; from 1865 to 1874 an additional £59,000. It was there that Newman delivered his celebrated lectures on the *Idea of a University*. The teaching staff included scholars of the first rank, such as Eugene O'Curry, the great archaeologist and Celtic student; the jurist, John O'Hagan; the savant, W. K. Sullivan. The great theological College of Maynooth, University College, Dublin, and the Cecilia Street School of Medicine, were also incorporated with the University. I may add that nominally the Catholic University of Ireland still exists to-day.

[41] Secondary Education was not developed until after 1878.

[42] Also that excellent Catholic School of Medicine (Cecilia Street) with about 250 students, who pass their examinations either at the College of Physicians or at the Royal University (University, Commission *Report*, p. 15-16). University College, the property of the Episcopate, has been handed over to the management of the Jesuits: it is governed by a President and Council of six members elected by the College staff; (out of these six members five are laymen). There are fifteen

University of Ireland. Despite the absence of any endowment other than private, and the want of suitable premises, and adequate libraries and laboratories, this College, under the management of the Jesuits, gives an excellent Arts education to a body of nearly two hundred students. At the annual examinations of the Royal University of Ireland the students of University College show great superiority over their competitors from the Queen's Colleges. This Royal University,[43] a non-teaching body, replaced the old Queen's University in 1879. It passes through its hands, at degree and other examinations, without any qualification of residence in the University, an average of about eighteen hundred students every year.

All this, however, is very far from providing adequate or acceptable machinery for bringing out the best intellectual faculties of the three millions and a half who to-day constitute Catholic and Nationalist Ireland. This latter wishes to educate herself, and to do so in her own, and not in England's, way. She protests against the

recognised professors, of whom ten are laymen. All these professors are Fellows of the Royal University, and in this capacity are paid at the rate of £400 per annum; consequently, University College is indirectly subsidised by the State to the extent of £6,000 per year. In 1896-97, there were 130 students; in 1901-1902, 181. (See Balfour *op. cit.*, p. 289, etc.). *University Commission Report*, p. 14, etc. *Ib. Appendix to the First Report*, p. 75, etc., and *Appendix to the Third Report*, p. 359, etc.).

3 The Royal University of Ireland receives £20,000 yearly out of the Church Fund arising from the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, and also receives the candidates' fees. (See University Commission, *Appendix to First Report*, p. 288). It is managed by a Chancellor and a Senate composed of 36 members, half Protestants and half Catholics, thirty members being chosen by the State and six by the Graduates. The Senate elects 32 Fellows or assistant professors, who retain their posts for seven years, with an annual salary of £400, and who must lecture in a college approved of by the Senate. (Half are Catholics and half Protestants). In 1890, there were 1,803 candidates for the examinations; in 1901 1,779 (of whom 399 were women). (*Cf.* Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 283, etc.). University Commission Report, p. 4, etc. This complicated organisation has had no great success. Being only an examining body, the Royal University has had no influence either on learning or on the country; it has all the less on account of the factitious equilibrium maintained between the two great religious creeds. There is a want of cohesion and of harmony; the whole scheme is very artificial and creates an inferior intellectual standard. *Cf. University Commission Report*, p. 58, i, 2 and 3).

Protestant and Anglo-Saxon monopoly of Higher Education, asks for educational equality, and claims that the State should establish a centre of Higher Education which shall not be anti-Catholic and anti-National, or if one prefers to put it in that way, shall be Catholic and National in the same way that Trinity College is English and Protestant.[44]

From 1870 onwards[45] there has been incessant agitation on the question of higher education in Ireland. Each year the Irish claims are brought before Parliament and the public, and each year they are supported by some broad-minded Protestants in Ireland; for instance, by the late Mr. Lecky, the historian, member for Trinity College, and by Sir Horace Plunkett, and in England by politicians of such different shades of opinion as Mr. John Morley, the Radical Minister, and Mr. Arthur Balfour, the leader of the Conservative Party. In 1901-1902, a Commission of Inquiry, composed almost entirely of Protestants, came over to study the question once more.[46]

4 What is wanted is a system putting Catholics and Nationalists on the same footing with Anglo-Saxons and Protestants as regards higher education; there is no *sine qua non* attached to any one plan. The different possible solutions are:—First, the creation of a Catholic University; or secondly, the creation of a Catholic College parallel with Trinity College and within the University of Dublin, or under the Royal University. Others say—let the Catholics, after having obtained a few easily won concessions, crowd into Trinity College, and convert it into a National University. This plan, occasionally praised even by the priests, would seem the simplest, but unfortunately the time for it is past. It should have been executed sixty years ago; to-day the Protestant and anti-Irish spirit is too firmly rooted in Trinity College. Finally, there is the solution of the Irish University Question suggested by Mr. Gladstone in 1873. The University of Dublin was to admit, on an equality with Trinity College, the Queen's Colleges of Cork and Belfast, the Catholic University of Dublin, and the Presbyterian Magee College at Londonderry. This new or enlarged University was not to touch on controversial questions in history and philosophy; no endowment was offered to the Catholic University. This project, which was satisfactory to no party, was rejected by the House of Commons on the third reading. (*Cf.* Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 278).

5 In that year a petition, signed by over a thousand laymen, and asking for a University education accessible to Catholics, was presented to the Prime Minister. (See University Commission, *Appendix to First Report*, p. 289).

46 The Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland, presided over by Lord Robertson, met in September, 1901, and, after numerous enquiries made in Ireland (see the 3 vols. of Evidence

Evidence was given as to all the evils that the country suffers from for want of higher education, evils not only intellectual and educational, but social, economic and political.[47] The Commission published a report favourable to Ireland, but no result followed. The Conservative Government was afraid of the uncompromising opposition of the Orangemen of Ireland and the Dissenters of England to the Irish claims. Subsidise Papistry, Superstition, Ultramontanism ? Never ! The Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland are already powerful enough ! Besides, everyone knows that Catholics are necessarily incapable of independent thought in the realms of learning and science ! Recently (1906) a new Commission was appointed by the Liberal Government to examine into the condition of Trinity College, a task which the previous Commission had not been permitted to undertake.

heard), published a *Report*, dated 28th February, 1903. Trinity College, knowing herself in danger, had succeeded in having herself excluded from the enquiry, which was thus in a sense incomplete. The Report formulates just criticisms against the existing system of higher education in Ireland, recognises the insufficiency of the University education open to Catholics, and proposes to convert the Royal University into a teaching body to which would be affiliated the three Queen's Colleges and University College, Dublin, this last being subsidised by the State ; this is not the " equality " demanded by Ireland, the equality between Catholics and Protestants, between Irish and Anglo-Saxons. A short time after the publication of this *Report*, a plan, suggested by Lord Dunraven, was agreed upon by the Castle and the Bishops. A Catholic College, parallel to Trinity College, was to be created within the University of Dublin. Here was true equality, but a veto from the Orangemen was sufficient to make the Government retreat, and the project was shelved.

47 See especially the evidence of Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick (*Evidence, Appendix to the First Report*, p. 12-59). There is no better exposition of the consequences of the absence of higher education upon the general standard of intellectual culture, on the insufficient training of the teachers in primary and secondary schools, on the difficulties which beset the formation of a middle class, and on the incompetency of the majority of politicians in Ireland. Mr. John Morley, when Chief Secretary, had already, speaking (1893) of the appointment of Government officials, remarked upon the inferiority of Irish Catholics owing to their lack of higher education. Sir Horace Plunkett has shown what an enormous help the existence of such an education, if national, would be in forwarding economic and social progress. He has clearly shown how the higher education of Catholics, far from increasing the influence of the Church, would, in reality, tend to diminish the temporal power of the Irish priesthood. (*Appendix to the Third Report*, p. 231, etc.).

The Report advised firstly, the reform of this institution from within, and secondly, the creation in Dublin [48] of a new centre of higher education. At last it seemed as if the Liberal Government had decided to act. A Bill designed to meet the claims of Ireland with regard to University education was foreshadowed in the Speech from the Throne, at the beginning of 1907.[49] Will it have any result? England has established a University for the Hindoos in India, and one for the Mahometans at Khartoum. Will she ever establish in Ireland a University for the Irish?

It should be evident by this time to what an extent the Irish system of education, a system so absolutely inadequate, so antiquated and so little adapted to the needs of the country, has fostered the national decadence and the mental and moral slavery and paralysis of Ireland. And yet it is undoubtedly in the discipline, training and stimulus of her schools that Ireland might expect to find her salvation. Her intellectual resources have been no less neglected than her natural wealth, and education alone can develop them. Ireland needs a moral and psychological emancipation to complete the civil and religious emancipation of 1829. Should not this be

[48] *Report* of the *Royal Commission on Trinity College, Dublin*, January 18th, 1907. This Commission, presided over by Sir Edward Fry, consisted of nine members, amongst whom were Dr. Douglas Hyde, Chief Baron Palles, etc. As regards Trinity College, it was proposed to hand over the management of that institution (at present in the hands of the Provost and Senior Fellows), to a Governing Body, the majority of whose members would be elected by the Fellows or by other College Professors. As to the new College to be established in Dublin, five members of the Commission (including Dr. Hyde) proposed incorporating it and the three Queen's Colleges within the University of Dublin, and side by side with Trinity College. Three other Commissioners suggested incorporating the three Queen's Colleges and the new College within the Royal University.

[49] 12th February, 1907. It was said that the idea of the Government was to establish a new College in Dublin; a College which, though free from all religious tests, should be in practice assigned to Catholics, the Anglicans having Trinity College, and the Presbyterians Queen's College, Belfast. This College was to be incorporated in Dublin University, which latter proposal was naturally strongly opposed by the representatives of Trinity College. The Queen's Colleges of Belfast and Cork would also be incorporated, and Queen's College, Galway, and the Royal University, would disappear.

required from her schools? For over a century the movement in Ireland has been towards a responsible and individualistic democracy; is it not the function of the schools to form the individual and teach him his responsibilities? After all, what is the Irish Question if it is not a question of national education? This was foreseen by the noble minds of "Young Ireland" sixty years ago. Thomas Davis and his friends, seeing in education a condition and a necessity of all progress, never ceased preaching the new gospel: "Educate that you may be free,"[50] to a country sunk in an abyss of ignorance and intellectual lethargy. They tell us with shame that there were in Ireland at that time six counties without a single bookseller's shop. Their teaching was, unhappily, too soon forgotten, amid the disasters of the Great Famine, the Insurrection of 1848, and the reaction which followed these events. At last, however, the ideals of Young Ireland came to life again, and through their influence a new spirit seemed to be slowly developing in the nation. It almost appeared as if a New Ireland was rising from the ruins of the Old Ireland.

Fifteen or twenty years ago, Ireland, full of hopes of independence and liberty, was deeply engaged in an agrarian and political struggle. Alarmed at the outrages committed, and horrified at the idea of domestic strife, some of the more sagacious spirits had begun to hesitate and reflect, when a remarkable train of events took place, ruining the nation's illusions, and stultifying her efforts. The defeat and death of Parnell in 1890-1891, the rejection, in 1893, of the Home Rule Bill by the House of Lords, was followed in 1895 by the rise of the Conservatives to power with a majority so large that for many a day Ireland could expect nothing from the good-will of England. Her people exhibited no anger, or inclination to rebellion, but the violence of the shock awakened them from their dreams and opened their eyes to realities.

50 Thomas Davis, *Influences of Education.* (See *Prose Writings* of Thomas Davis, edited by T. W. Rolleston, London, 1890, p. 212-215).

They grasped the situation, and realised that circumstances were no longer in their favour. At Westminster the Irish Party had split into two and then into three sections, which spent all their time quarrelling with each other and were powerless apart; in Ireland there was internal and exhausting strife between the various parties. Conquered for a time, Ireland, mournful and exhausted, was thrown back upon her own resources.

She examined her conscience and discovered that she herself, as well as England, was in part to blame for her misfortunes. She had too long suffered herself to be wholly absorbed in political agitation, that source of trouble and disorganisation, in the idea of independence, in "Home Rule," that ideal for which she had sacrificed everything else, which will one day be granted to her beyond all doubt in one form or another, so that in effect she need but let time work on her side. But in other respects was not time working against her? As things were going, was it not plunging into grave peril that part of the life of a nation which stands above politics and politicians, even above liberty itself, namely, Nationality? One or two hundred Members of Parliament sitting in College Green, in that great triangular building with the Doric colonnade, now owned by the Bank, would not make Ireland a nation, and would never by waving a magic wand endow her with every blessing and every virtue. Politics, even liberty itself, are not ends, but means. How would Ireland benefit if, when she finally won political freedom, there should be no longer an Irish nation? It was imperative to preserve and regenerate her nationality. Thus by a psychological revolution, the soul of the nation would be remade. By means of education her spiritual strength would be revived, her moral heritage regained, and the character of her people re-created. By reforms from within Ireland should once again be made a nation worthy of the name, worthy of her past, and capable of living the life of the present day. Irishmen have been accustomed to attribute all their

misfortunes to England, and to expect every reform to come from the same quarter. Salvation, however, can only come to Ireland from Ireland herself. It cannot come from a man, nor from a class of men, but solely and wholly from the nation at large. The people must be awakened to a new life by education, initiative, and strenuous effort. For, as Burke had said, a country must be independent in fact before it could hope to be independent in name.

This new spirit of reform and regeneration from within, the work of a few philosophical and far-seeing minds, has slowly developed, gaining in force and influence, and has gradually extended itself amongst all classes of society. In practice it has taken the form of three main movements which, having the same origin, have found their way into neighbouring, yet distinct, channels.

The object of one of these Movements is to develop and improve Irish education. It must be admitted that this movement makes little visible progress, because it is dependent on the co-operation of governmental departments. It will, therefore, be sufficient to notice briefly one of its first results. In the matter of primary education, the force of public opinion recently induced the National Board not only to suppress the "results system," so destructive to intelligence, but to establish a more flexible and more varied programme, which encourages the managers to show some initiative, and gives an important place to manual and practical instruction.[51] Extra classes on the French system have also been organised in the schools, and superior primary schools established. As to secondary education, a vigorous campaign against cramming has succeeded in diminishing this evil, and in procuring the establishment of a system of inspection which will lessen the objections to the examination system. In the matter of higher education,

[51] The new programme came into force in 1900, in consequence of the Commission of Inquiry into Irish Manual and Technical Instruction, 1898. See *Evidence* and *Report* of this Commission.

the Bishops, without abandoning the claim of Catholic and Nationalist Ireland for proper University equipment, have created a Scholarship Fund, subscribed to by priests, laymen, and schools, which find themselves denied facilities, and administered by a joint committee. The object of this fund is to provide higher education for clever young men at the conclusion of their secondary courses.[52]

In a different but cognate order of ideas we have to notice a remarkable development in the matter of Public Libraries, both in the towns and in the rural districts, where there are already a fair number of parochial libraries. Moreover, since 1902, the District Councils have had power to establish public libraries supported by a local rate.[53] All this seems of little account when one remembers how much needs to be done in Ireland in the cause of education. It indicates, however, a change and an advance in public opinion, a revival of interest in educational matters, and a desire for more, and for better, instruction.

The two other Movements which we have to study, although they have by no means reached their complete development, have progressed far enough to exhibit perceptible and definite results. The first, the more general, and the more original, is based upon history, and aims at regenerating the individual by re-uniting him with his race and its past, and above all with the Gaelic

[52] The Scholarship Fund for Higher Education was inaugurated in June, 1905, by the Irish Episcopate, with a first donation of £1,000; it has been rapidly augmented by individual and collective subscriptions. Whilst awaiting the foundation of a National University, the men students who have been awarded Scholarships are sent to University College, and the women to St. Mary's College or Loreto College, Dublin.

[53] In 1855 an Act of Parliament had authorised the towns to impose a local rate of a penny in the pound for the establishment of public libraries. In 1902 this power was extended to rural districts, and by February 1906 twenty District Councils had profited by it. Some time ago a Rural Library Association was formed with the object of encouraging the development of country libraries. Parochial libraries are private institutions maintained by the clergy or by individuals. The Department of Agriculture (see above, Chap. II.) gives small premiums of £3 to these libraries.

language. Through this "Gaelic movement" the Irishman's existence is to be re-made from a social and psychological point of view.

The other movement, that of economic regeneration, aims at reforming the Irish character through "self-help," co-operation and technical instruction. By adapting the country to the conditions of modern life, its leaders hope to endow Ireland with those moral qualities and economic methods which alone can save her from material destruction. Soundness alike of principle and of method renders these movements superior to numberless so-called "new movements," which are born each year in Ireland, and which die almost at once. The fact that they are constructive also distinguishes them from any other experiment hitherto attempted in Ireland. They do not merely seek to destroy privileges and abuses; rather do they endeavour to re-construct the Ireland of the future on surer foundations.

These two movements must be successively studied, and afterwards I shall refer to the conditions necessary to their success; on the one hand religious peace, and on the other the assistance of the priests as the social leaders of the people. I shall, in fact, examine the religious question, which is, in the nature of things, intimately connected with the regeneration of Ireland.

CHAPTER II.—THE GAELIC MOVEMENT.

DUBLIN, 24 O'Connell Street. A high brick building in the noisy and populous main artery of Dublin. Above the entrance we read *Connradh na Gaedhilge*, Gaelic League; on the ground floor is a bookshop which sells only Irish books, Irish pamphlets, Irish newspapers. We go up to the first landing and find offices, business clerks: at our first word—in English—we are pulled up sharply by a blonde Celt who says something in Irish. We do not understand, but gather from his disdain that they have no need here for those unfortunates who at this time of the day in Ireland are still backward enough to be able to speak only English. All is soon explained, but we can already understand the astonishment, the irritation, of English people when, in the very heart of the British Isles, ten hours from London, in a city like Dublin, of 350,000 inhabitants, they hear a language spoken which they do not understand—a language 2,000 years old—or when in the West of Ireland, asking the way, they get the answer, given, moreover, in English, *No English, Sir*! When such English visitors are of an observant turn of mind and compare the Ireland of to-day with the Ireland of twenty years ago, they perceive that a great change has taken place, and they are not far wrong when they see in the revival of the Irish language the symbol and the agent of this profound transformation.[1]

[1] See on the Gaelic League the pamphlets and publications of the Gaelic League, the newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis*, the reviews, *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*, *Banba*, *Uladh*, etc., the evidence of Dr. Douglas Hyde before the *Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission*, 1899 (*Evidence*, p. 482, *et seq.*), and before the *Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland*, 1902 (*Evidence*, III., p. 34 *et seq.*). *Cf.* an article by Thomas O'Donnell, *L'Irlande, sa langue, sa liberté*, in

This transformation began fifteen or twenty years ago. In the time of recollection and retreat which followed on political disintegration, Ireland came to understand that if liberty had always been refused her it was because her nationality had not been forcibly enough affirmed before English eyes. She understood that independence alone does not make a nation; that independence itself may not always indicate nationhood; that the essential mark of nationhood is the intellectual, social and moral patrimony which the past bequeaths to the present, which, amplified, or at least preserved, the present must bequeath to the future; and that it is this which makes the strength and individuality of a people. And she had to recognise that, hypnotised as she was by the constitutional battle, she had neglected the care of this national heritage; she had allowed it to perish, and, letting substance go for shadow, abandoning her traditions, her mind, and her language, was, in contact with Anglo-Saxon influence, about to "denationalise" herself, to "Anglo-Saxonise" herself, or, to employ a word less barbarous, though less accurate,[2] to "Anglicise" herself.

Seeing the evil, she also saw the remedy. She perceived that psychological emancipation was more urgent, more necessary, than political emancipation; that legal Home Rule must follow moral Home Rule; that she must deanglicise herself first of all, regain her ancient patrimony, recover her language, her national customs, make positive a nationality that had come to be scarcely more than negative, and, by a supreme effort, bring to life an Ireland, no longer Anglo-Saxon but Irish.

la Revue (formerly *Revue des Revues*) of June 1st, 1903. See also the *Revival of Irish Literature* by various authors, London, 1894. *Ideals in Ireland*, by Lady Gregory and others, Dublin, 1901. *Literary Ideals in Ireland*, by John Eglinton and others, Dublin, 1899. *Irish Ideas*, by William O'Brien, London, 1893. *To-day and To-morrow in Ireland*, by Stephen Gwynn, London, 1903. *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland*, by D. P. Moran, Dublin, 1905. Douglas Hyde, *Literary History of Ireland*, London, 1903, p. 608, *et seq.*

[2] Less accurate because the United States is also a denationalising influence.

The Irish people set themselves courageously to this work of reconstruction. Slowly and quietly, a great movement, a Gaelic renaissance, grew out of the country's very heart. It was a popular and spontaneous movement that united classes instead of dividing them; a movement in its nature non-political, having for its origin no thought of hatred against England, but a very profound and legitimate sentiment for social preservation; such a movement in fact towards traditional and national re-birth as took place during the century in many small countries of the Continent whose life had likewise been stifled by the influence of stronger peoples. In Ireland this re-birth had provoked an enthusiasm, a passion, one might almost say a faith, such as only the greatest national and religious revolutions have been able to create in the history of the world.

I.—Anglicisation.

England had indeed done all that she could to Anglicise Ireland. Mr. W. B. Yeats, one of the masters of poetry in the English language, has said that the final object of all politics and government is the making of character. So one might say that English government in Ireland has had as final object the fashioning of the Irish Celt according to the Anglo-Saxon type, that is to say, the turning of the Irishman into an Englishman. The work did not prove easy, and at times, under Cromwell, for example, England preferred the more effective or simpler method of extermination. The battle of the two civilisations had been indecisive long enough. Up to the days of the Protector, Ireland, despite proscriptive laws, had absorbed the Anglo-Norman and English planters, who had become more national than the Nationalists, *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*. These settlers adopted the ways of the Irish, spoke the Irish language, took Irish names; in fact there was but one man in the Irish Parliament of

1541 who could speak English—the Earl of Ormond. And perhaps nothing would have checked this tendency but the great persecutions, the plantations—above all, the Penal Laws, which for so long destroyed all the powers of resistance and of growth that Ireland's soul possessed. In the period that separates the revolution in England from that in Ireland, the wave hung at poise between the assimilative forces of Erin and those of Albion. Thus it was only towards the end of the eighteenth century that British society and culture represented in Ireland by the English and Protestant garrison, began to draw to themselves the Irish aristocracy, and with it the clergy and *bourgeoisie* who were now gradually giving up the use of the national language. This was the period during which Protestants, such as Grattan and Plunkett, upheld the claims of Catholic Ireland ; and the enlightened classes begun to see in a friendship with England their country's hope of safety and of freedom. Soon after came the days of Thomas Moore, the famous poet, and of Daniel O'Connell, the great agitator ; and the poetry of one and the politics of the other were founded upon the basis of English speech. The people themselves were soon won over, and their " Anglicisation " was due not merely to the imitative instinct, but also to a system of primary education, called " national," whose effects were carefully calculated by its promoters. The system was organised in 1831 by Stanley (Lord Derby) and by the Anglican Archbishop, Whately. All the evidence that is available seems to show that their object must have been to destroy at any cost the mother-tongue of the children. True, the language is not proscribed by law in the schools. Nevertheless the teachers sent to those districts where Irish is still generally spoken do not know Irish ; the school-books, copy-books, and models that are used are all English ; Irish history is prohibited or, worse still, distorted. Is not history patriotic, and is not all that is patriotic seditious ? The child must not know the names of Clontarf, Tara, Owen

Roe O'Neill. His mind becomes a desert. The language and traditions of the Gael are thus destroyed, but at the cost of the intelligence of the younger generation. Lately someone asked a teacher in a Western village how he, who knew no Irish, could claim to teach children who knew no English : " It takes me two months, to begin with, to wring their Irish out of them," he answered, and twisted his hands as though pressing water out of wet linen. Not long ago Lady Gregory told how, in a certain island on the Western coast, there is to be found, with the exception of a few customs officials, but one inhabitant who does not know Irish, and that is the schoolmaster.[3] Even now there are old people who remember how in their childhood a wooden tablet was hung upon their necks ; on it a notch was made for each Irish word they spoke, and, at the end of school hours, they received a stroke for every notch.

In the result, the language of Saint Patrick and Saint Brigid, after having offered a wonderful resistance for centuries—the first law against it dates from 1367—has been rapidly approaching extinction for the last hundred years. The Penal Laws had tended to preserve it, in that they separated Celt from Saxon, but Catholic Emancipation, drawing together as it did the two Irelands, seemed its death-warrant. At the eve of the Great Famine, the mass of the people, outside the large towns, still spoke Irish ; to-day, partly owing to emigration, Irish is only spoken by 600,000 persons, out of four and a half millions, and that concurrently with English. Twenty thousand persons speak Irish only ; these are mainly of the West.[4] At the very time when Zeuss, on the Continent, rediscovered the key of Celtic study,[5] Modern Irish, heir to the tongue of Oisin and of Finn, was disappearing most rapidly from Irish soil.

3 *Ireland, Real and Ideal,* by Lady Gregory (*Nineteenth Century,* 1898). *Cf. Ideals in Ireland,* p. 55.

4 The Census of 1901 (General Report, 72) states that 620,189 persons speak Irish concurrently with English, and 20,953 speak Irish only.

5 It was in 1853 that Zeuss, the father of Celtic studies, published his *Grammatica Celtica* in Berlin.

Language and people have fled from the mother-country, the language even more rapidly than the people. The Old Connacht peasant still tells his rosary in Irish, but his sons and daughters follow in English. Too often the priest in Donegal or in Kerry has ceased to preach, and the faithful to pray, in Irish.[6] And it is sadder still to think that under the influence of English schooling and of the *bourgeoisie*, these poor Irish peasants have come at length to despise the language of their ancestors, to despise an utterance, sweet, fluid and musical, full of poetry and rhythm, as though it were a mark of inferiority, a source of shame, something to hide, "like the blue ring on the nail of a mongrel." . . . . . It is fashion that is killing the language, not want of vitality. A German Celticist remarked a while ago that Paddy speaks Irish to his pig which he brings to the market, to his donkey which brings him there, to the dozen children or the half-dozen little pigs who live in his cabin, to all those who are surrounded by the same misery as he. But as for speaking Irish to the priest, to the "gentry," or to the stranger whom he meets on the road, that would show a want of education.[7] Mgr. MacHale, a forerunner of the new gospel, has told how he was answered by one of his diocesans when he suggested that the discussion of their business should be conducted in Irish. "Your Grace, I have a great deal too much respect for you."[8] Often, in the West, the children mistake English for Irish.[9] Others, on the contrary, are proud that they do not know Irish; and they have a word to express their sentiments towards it: "Irish is bet."[10]

6 The Catholic clergy in the past often discouraged the use of the Irish language. There was a reason for this, viz., the need for combating the Protestant propaganda carried on in the native idiom.

7 Zimmer, *Der Pankeltismus in Grossbritanien und Irland, Preussiche Jahrbücher*, July and August, 1898.

8 Ib. *Cf. Irish Ideas*, p. 68.

9 See the examples instanced by Dr. Hyde in *The Revival of Irish Literature*, p. 137, *et seq.*

10 *I.e., beaten.* Lady Gregory tells how the peasants said of Dr. Hyde when he went out shooting over her land in the West of Ireland, "He speaks Irish, he cannot be a *gentleman*."

A short time ago I had this reply quoted to me as that of a farm labourer to his comrade who had asked him a question in Irish: "Hell to your soul, can't I speak English as well as you!"

Note the vulgar brutality of the expression, and compare it with the softness of tone, the delicacy, that are distinctive of the ancient Celtic speech. In changing his language, the Irish peasant is irrevocably losing that courtesy, that respect for himself, which even yesterday was so striking to the traveller in the very poorest villages of the West. These things made bygone Ireland, like bygone Spain, a nation of gentlemen. The Irish peasant is growing demoralised, degraded, vulgarised, not only by the evil tourist influence, but, above all, by the base London Press which day by day sends out its bales of "half-penny horrors," and penny dreadfuls, even to the very hamlets of Munster and Connaught. He is on the road to become a Cockney. Now there is in the tendencies that we have described something more than that significant disappearance of local colour which may be observed everywhere at the present day. A slow process of denationalisation is indicated, traces of which are to be perceived in an even more marked form among the Irish middle classes—not to mention the aristocracy, which is, perhaps hopelessly, Anglicised. The professional and commercial classes of the towns long ago gave up the use of the Irish language, and thus of their own free will cut themselves off from the sources of national tradition. Since the emancipation of the Catholics in 1829 the *bourgeoisie* have been naturally attracted towards Government employment of all kinds, situations in banks, and in large businesses where the spirit that reigns is, as a rule, Anglo-Saxon where it is not actually anti-Irish. But the ruin of this class has been above all due to its incurable desire to admire and imitate things English, English customs and ideas, to its shoneenism,[11] the national and,

[11] English adaptation of the Irish word *Séoinin* (practically, snob one who copies the mind and the manners of the "respectable" classes).

social sin of Irish snobs. Only the "respectable" is of value; now everything English is respectable, and nothing is respectable which is not English. The "Saxon," the hereditary enemy, is despised and hated, but such is his influence that he is copied in all things; he is of the "dominant race." Under William III. and Cromwell, Ireland looked towards France and Spain, now her eyes are fixed on America and England. In small things as in great, it would seem that all initiative and originality are lost. Everyone grafts an English accent upon his Irish brogue. Fashions, customs, sports, come from England. The caricatures in "Punch," the satires of "Truth" are the humourous food of the Irish. In the theatre one sees but the latest novelties from London, in the music halls songs and monologues in which Paddy, playing the fool, serves to amuse his compatriots with his grotesque antics. Dress and furniture are English. Girls are called no longer Brigid or Eileen but Maud or Mabel; boys not Donal or Diarmuid, but Ned or Bertie. Even family names are Anglicised. The O or the Mac is suppressed; O'Byrne becomes Burns, O'Shaughnessy, Chauncey.[12] So it is with names of places. Tailtin, for instance, is changed to Telltown. As regards music, the traditional harp of Ireland has, so to speak, disappeared; the country fiddlers and pipers, the bagpipe and violin players are

[12] See the curious details in Dr. Douglas Hyde's article *The Necessity for De-anglicising Ireland* (*The Revival of Irish Literature*, p. 141, *et seq.*). In 1465 an Act of Parliament ordered the Irish to take English names, or names of towns, of colours, and of trades; hence, Butler, Cooke, London, etc. What before the Penal Laws was far more widespread was the Norman, or Anglo-Irishman's taking of an Irish name; thus, the De Burghs called themselves MacWilliam, the De Courcys, MacPatrick, the Stauntons, MacAveely, etc. In the nineteenth century, on the other hand, the Anglicisation of patronymic names went on rapidly. Sometimes they were written in English with an appropriate change; Mahaffy was made of Mac Gaffey, Hyde of O'Sheehan, Kane of O'Cahan, etc. Sometimes they were translated according to the original meaning of the name; Mac Inteer (*Mac an tSaoir*, son of the carpenter) became Carpenter. Occasionally the translation turned to a pun, and O'Gara taking the origin of his name from the word *Caraim* (I love) adopted the English name Love! (*Cf.* Dr. Hyde's Evidence before the 1898 Commission on *Intermediate Education in Ireland*, *Evidence*, p. 482, *et seq.*).

gone. The great newspapers, anti-English though they be in politics, are all managed and edited in the English manner.

Then lastly there are the politicians. Mr. O'Donnell is instanced as having revolutionised the House of Commons a short while ago by making a speech in Irish, or the commencement of a speech—for the Speaker interrupted him, observing that for six hundred years English only had been spoken in the English Parliament. But when his colleagues hold their meetings in the West where Irish is still generally spoken, they seldom address their audiences in Irish.

From one end of Ireland to the other one sees, in towns and villages alike, a class of persons who, while they remain Nationalist politically and preach fervently against English tyranny, have no other ambition than to become *West Britons*, as the phrase goes. Truly the way of Anglicisation is sweet and easy. Ireland has but to forget her race, deny her ancestry, suppress her history. But whither does that path lead in the long run? Ireland might Anglicise herself, but would she, can she ever become English? We may doubt it. What is certain at present is Ireland's mental and moral loss, or likely loss, which will comprise above all her intellectual vigour, her suppleness and freedom of spirit. She receives more ideas and creates fewer, she invents less and imitates more. Cut off from its roots in the past, the Irish mind loses, with the national language, its best instrument, loses its vivacity and originality, becomes dry and languid. Formerly the Irishman's interests were varied and acute. Now he suffers from a mental famine, and Englishmen already notice how their influence has blunted the noted spirit and animation of the Irish. It must be remembered that there is a constantly increasing drain on the intellectual strength of the people, by reason of the openings for employment which England offers them in journalism, the colonial service, Indian administration, and commerce, and which do not exist in their own country. By the

Anglicisation of herself, Ireland, from the moral point of view, loses what such a race, which has remained always young at heart and which has been kept pure by agricultural life and the influence of a clergy, who are at once powerful and popular, must inevitably lose in contact with the utilitarianism and materialism of a very advanced civilisation, and especially in contact with our industrial and centralised societies of to-day. Anglicisation, so say observant Irishmen, tends to lower the moral level of the nation, and to decrease the individual's respect for himself, his energy, his spirit of initiative, and his sense of responsibility. Has Ireland adopted the better features of the Anglo-Saxon character, those which are worthy of respect? No, but she has taken from it precisely what is lowest and most vile; she has adopted the vices of England and not her virtues—and because they were easier to adopt! It is a well-known fact that just as the average rate of criminality is very small in Ireland relatively to what it is in the great English towns, the natives of those districts where Irish still lives are, morally, on a higher level than those of other parts of the country. They are cleaner, more virtuous, better-mannered, said Dr. Douglas Hyde a while ago, and he is a Protestant who has lived among them. In no part of the country, said the Cardinal Primate of Ireland in his turn, is faith stronger and religious feeling more profound, than among the Irish-speaking population.[13] Impregnated as it is with mysticism and spirituality, the old tongue is the most powerful factor in their religious beliefs, and at the same time the best safeguard against the agnosticism and paganism of the present day.

If Ireland were to gain in other directions what she loses in her moral traditions, her culture and originality, through Anglicisation, it would be another matter. But a people can only develop by developing its natural gifts and native qualities. It cannot, as it chooses, acquire the soul of another people by some national metempsychosis.

3 Quoted by Dr. Hyde in *Gaelic League Pamphlet*, No. 16, p. 14.

As soon as it abandons its natural goal, its natural possibilities, to copy its neighbour and to forge a borrowed civilisation, it disqualifies and condemns itself out of its own mouth. Adoption is no substitute for heredity : to imitate is to decay, with peoples as with individuals. Ireland, the country of Ireland, may well become an English Shire, a Province of England, as did the ancient Kingdom of Kent. The people of Ireland may cease to be a nation. The word Ireland may come to be but a geographical expression. But the Irish cannot become English. In ceasing to become Celts they will not become Saxons. Anglicisation can but "denationalise" them. It will not give them a fresh civil status. Their position will be that of the unclassed. They will become the lost children of history, without future or past. To-day Anglicisation can but signify the national extinction of Ireland.

II.—The Gaelic League.

A day came when observant minds in Ireland became aware of the danger which the nation ran through the cancer of Anglicisation, and understood the necessity for reform in the shape of the liberation of the Irish soul from the intellectual yoke of England. But how was a national reconstruction to be effected ? How was the country to be joined again to its past traditions, and given a mental and moral life of its own ? It was certain that Anglicisation had begun its work, when the old language had been lost. Therefore, must not the Irish Renaissance begin with the readoption of that language ? So thought a small and *elite* group of Irish patriots, men of talent and enthusiasm, imbued with the national gospel preached by Thomas Davis forty years earlier—a gospel which Ireland had to some extent forgotten amidst the sufferings of the Great Famine, Fenianism and the Land Wars. Prominent in this group was the descendant of an old

Protestant family of Roscommon, a Celtic scholar and folk-lorist, a poet of merit in English, a poet in Irish also, so say the connoisseurs, Dr. Douglas Hyde. He had the genius for propaganda, and when the country was ripe for it, gave body to his ideas by founding the Gaelic League, with the aid of his early friends, in 1893.[1]

The Gaelic League—though to limit the Irish renaissance by placing it under this title would be to limit its actual scope—may be said to be a faithful representative of the general ideas underlying the new Irish movement. It has declared its objects to be, the preservation of Irish as the national language, the study of ancient Irish literature, and the cultivation of a modern literature in the Irish language. But we must be careful not to judge it by its name. The Gaelic League is not a society of scholars, and leaves to others all that concerns literature and philology, pure and simple. It is occupied with propaganda, the application of its doctrine of a national renaissance on the basis of the national language. It intends to confer anew upon the country a psychological

[1] Thomas Davis was concerned chiefly with the rebirth of the national idea (see nevertheless his essay: *Our National Language*, in the *Prose Writings of Thomas Davis*, edited by T. W. Rolleston, p. 158, *et seq.*), The revival of the Gaelic language was, on the other hand, preached, about the middle of the nineteenth century, by another Young Irelander. Smith O'Brien, and by Monsignor MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, All the same, until 1876, there was no sign manifested of a practical effort in favour of the national language. But in that year there was founded by Father Nolan, aided by David Comyn and others, the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, which still exists to-day and is chiefly occupied with the editing and distribution of manuals, books of study, etc., and gives both prizes and grants for the study of Irish. In 1878 this Society succeeded, by the aid of John Fleming, in placing Irish on the programme of the primary schools. In the following year, the most enthusiastic and active element—with Father Nolan at its head—separated itself from the Society and formed The Gaelic Union, with the intention of a more energetic propaganda. From 1882 onwards the Gaelic Union published the *Gaelic Journal*, which was managed by David Comyn, John Fleming, and Father O'Growney, successively. This last—one of the men who by their faith and simple modesty have done most for the language—became in 1889, Professor of Irish in the great seminary of Maynooth, where he restored the study of the national language to a position of honour. (See *The O'Growney Memorial Volume*, by Miss Agnes O'Farrelly, M.A., Dublin, 1904). Finally, in 1893, Dr. Hyde, with the help of David Comyn, Father O'Growney, John MacNeill, and O'Neill Russell, formed, from the small Gaelic Union, the Gaelic League itself.

education, and, by means of the national language, by the revival of national art and literature, and the reconstitution of a national social system, to regenerate its soul from within and teach Ireland how she may again be a nation.

What it says, and what its directing spirits say to the nation, in their pamphlets, newspapers and public meetings may be summed up in some such fashion as this :—

" Ireland has reached the critical moment of her history. She is quietly sliding down the easy and fatal declivity of Anglicisation at the base of which is written : *Finis Hiberniæ*. Shame upon our fathers, shame upon ourselves, to have denied our past, forfeited our honour, accepted with gaiety of heart our assimilation with the Sassenach. We are living on a lie and soon we shall die of it. In a generation or two all will be over with us, if we do not recover ourselves again, that is to say, become Irish and cease to be West Britons. We must rebuild a National Erin, an Irish Ireland.

" For too long we have confused two things, politics and nationality. The country will not be saved by parliamentary manoeuvres, however clever, nor by the speeches of the ' Irish Brigade ' at Westminster, however eloquent. Politicians do not make a nationality—indeed they may sometimes help to destroy one. It is our links with the past, it is the survival in us of our ancestors—and by the word ancestor we do not mean Swift or Grattan but all the race of Erin since the glorious Gaels at the dawn of history—that make us a nation ; it is the community of ideas, of sentiment, of language, binding century to century, and generation to generation. It is, alas, all that we have been losing for fifty years, all that we must now regain. Whether we obtain Home Rule in ten years or in twenty, is not a vital matter for the nation. Home Rule can wait, but not the cause of our nationality, nor that of our language, for on the day when these are gone, all hope of liberty will perish therewith. ' What ! ' England will ask, ' you claim

independence ? By what title ? Are you not English ? What language do you speak ? ' Let us labour then to reform our national individuality, and, above all, let us resume our national language. The first of liberties is that of the soul !

" When we travel abroad why are we always counted as English ? Because language is the chief sign of nationality. ' The tongue of the conquerors in the mouth of the conquered is but the language of slaves,' wrote Tacitus, and as Thomas Davis so finely said : " A people without a language of its own is only half a nation. A nation should guard its language more than its territories—'tis a surer barrier, a more important frontier, than mountain or river."[2] When the language is Irish the heart will be Irish ! Be certain that an Irish speaking Ireland will be free for ever . . . . . .

" Do you know what our national language is ? An empty system of algebraical signs, a dictionary of lifeless formulas ? No, it is the soul of the nation. It is the genius of the people ; it represents and preserves their beliefs and traditions, their type of mind and of heart, and these in their turn survive in and through it. It is the key to our history, our beliefs, our psychology, our ancient Celtic literature ; better still, it is the key to a potential literature, a whole world of ideas and of intense passion . . . . . And people wish that all this should vanish ! Truly the intellectual and literary future of Ireland depends on the future of our national language.

" It is nonsense to say that we wish to rid ourselves of the language of Shakespeare. We need English for our material life, Irish for our moral life. Between the one and the other there is no more incompatibility than exists between the catechism and the multiplication table. We wish to be bi-lingual as are the Czechs, the Swiss, and the Flemish, and many other people who are counted amongst the most capable and intelligent of nations and

[2] *Our National Language* (*Prose Writings*, p. 160).

who are better armed than others in the struggle for life. 'Who knows but one language, knows none,' said Max Muller. For our children there can be no better mental gymnastic than the study of our beautiful language which is so rich and synthetic; no better moral training than that which a language so pure, so ideal, so poetical, gives them, uplifting, fortifying, spiritualizing, as it is; and offering, as it does, the best barrier against the mammon worship of the day. Our national language will re-transform us into Irishmen, by drawing us close again to our race, as to something greater than ourselves; it will give back to us that proud dignity, that energy, that initiative which never fail to awaken in weak peoples a lively sentiment of their distinct nationality; and at the same time will open up the way to material prosperity, for there is no case in European history in which a national renaissance has not been accompanied or followed by an economic one.

"So the hour has come for the choice: we must conquer Anglicisation or perish at its hands. Either we will make of Ireland a nation again, or there will soon be no Ireland. The future depends upon the people!"

How the people of Ireland have replied to these exhortations, how Irish hearts have beaten high, and Irish consciences awakened in response to this appeal, can best be gauged by a reflection upon the progress of the Gaelic League during the twelve or thirteen years of its existence. Though still growing, it has already in Ireland 964 branches,[3] local and popular centres of activity, whose work it is to spread the national idea and the national language by every means, and to make them active

3 At the head of the League is a President, Dr. Hyde, two Vice-Presidents, and an Executive Council (*Coiste Gnotha*) of 45 members. Each affiliated branch (*Craobh*) must pay an annual assessment, varying according to the number of its members. In 1900 there were as yet only 120 branches affiliated to the League; in 1902, 412. Several branches can join together to form a District Council (*Coiste Ceanntair*) which directs local action on a larger scale, organises festivals or *feiseanna*, calls together propagandist meetings, entertains organisers, teachers, etc. In 1903 there were 26 *Coiste Ceanntair*; in 1906 there

factors in the every-day life of the family and social circle. Their primary duty is to organise Irish language classes for the benefit of their members. These classes are practical above all in their scope, and are conducted sometimes by paid teachers and sometimes by generous volunteers whose work is almost always good, thanks to the very intelligent methods which the League has invented and furnished them with, and thanks also to the excellent little lesson-books, drawn up by the late Father O'Growney, and sold by the League at a few pence a volume. Such a teacher in the country manages, on his rounds, to hold a dozen classes or so regularly every week. There are special classes for workmen, for students, for ladies; special classes for beginners, for veterans, Irish history classes, singing and even dancing classes, where the old national airs are taught and the national reel and jig. Should we also mention this touching fact: the existence of an Irish class for the blind children of St. Mary's Hospice in Dublin?

In the summer, during holiday time, the enthusiasts of Irish speech come together in the western villages for the *Sgoil Saoire* (Summer School). There their teachers are the old peasants, from whom they learn not only the correct accent, the music of the language, but the spirit and tradition of ancient Irish culture, of which these peasants, who, from generation to generation, have gathered up the songs and legends of former times, are the most faithful guardians. In the summer also the *Seilge* are organised, that is to say, excursions to places of historical interest, with national sports and recreations. A *seilg* in Galway in 1901 was attended by no less than 2,000 pilgrims. In the winter evenings each branch holds

were 49. Each branch (*Craobh*) and each *Coiste Ceanntair* annually sends a certain number of delegates to the *Ard Fheis* (or Congress of the League), which meets in Dublin, decides questions of importance, and elects the members of the *Coiste Gnotha*. The League publishes an annual statement (in Irish). The receipts for 1905-6 reached £4,966 sterling (of which £1,915 came from the sale of books and brochures), plus £10,000 collected by Douglas Hyde in the course of an American tour.

reunions from time to time, lectures (*seanchus*), followed by discussions upon Irish subjects, concerts (*sgoruidheacht*), with choirs, Irish dances and songs, and *ceilidhe*, informal meetings on the lines of ancient village gatherings, where serious conversation—in Irish—alternates with music or a "recital," that is to say, a story or a piece of news, told, according to popular custom, by the author or a *raconteur*. Every year the Gaelic and National Festival, that of St. Patrick, is celebrated throughout Ireland, but notably in Dublin, by a monster procession in which the heads of the League are followed by its enthusiasts. In it students, priests, women and children, athletic clubs and boys' brigades, all march with solemn step to the sound of the old national airs. The day is a Bank Holiday, and even the public houses are in many cases closed. Irish sermons are preached in the churches and in the Catholic Pro-Cathedral of Dublin. Finally, every year the League has its Gaelic festivals, first those locally organised by the League branches under the name of *Feis*, then the provincial *Feiseanna*, lastly, the national festival or *Oireachtas*, which is annually held in Ireland, in the month of August, with great pomp, and the giving of a number of prizes and awards, in memory of an institution that flourished in Ireland's artistic past, like the Welsh *Eisteddfodd* and the Scotch *Mod*. There one views or takes part in competitions in Irish poetry, Irish speech-making, literary and historical essays, Irish comedy, Irish songs, dances and recitals; and these are almost always interesting in that they bear witness to a true natural taste, a delicate sentiment, and an absence of coarseness and vulgarity on the part of the performers, whether these be of the peasant or the middle class.

All this shows clearly enough how serious is the movement, how great is its influence over the people. A start—the first and greatest difficulty—has been made, and now the League is a power in Ireland. It sells annually 20,000 Gaelic books and pamphlets, in which are included *editiones principes* of the poets of the eighteenth

century, and new Irish publications, tales, and novels. Its financial resources are moderate. They represent, however, the spontaneous obol of the poor; and a large part of the annual subscription to the Language Fund, during St. Patrick's week, is made up of pence and of half-pence.

From the start the League has had the good sense officially to declare that it was both necessary and desirable that it should stand apart from all political and religious struggles; such has been its line of conduct, and now within it are found representatives of every party, from the strongest Orangemen to the fiercest Separatists. The majority of its members are Catholic and Nationalist, and in its ranks are a number of priests. Yet the president, in the person of Dr. Hyde, is a Protestant, and one of its strongest supporters was a leader of the Belfast Orangemen, the late Dr. Kane, who well said that though he was a Unionist and a Protestant, he did not forget that he was an O'Cahan. Lastly, it is marvellous to notice how the League, and through it the language movement, has spread through all those Irelands, small and great, that Irish emigration has created abroad; to London and to some great English towns (such as Oxford), where there are very active branches at work to-day, to Australia, to New Zealand, to South America (especially in Buenos Ayres); above all to the United States, where all the "Celtic Societies" so numerous and varied in character, have constituted themselves into the "American Gaelic League." Is it known that a short while ago there actually existed in Paris a class for Modern Irish at the Irish College? And what indeed may we not expect from a movement which thus unites the children of Erin in one country and another, in one continent and another, wherever need, or ambition, or the curse of England has driven them?

To-day the delicate point of action for the League is, geographically speaking, to be found in Western Ireland, on the Atlantic seaboard, where Irish is still the

everyday mother-tongue, but where its use is declining, the tendency being to despise it and to put it away as old-fashioned. The key of the work to which the League has set itself is to be found in the preservation of the Irish language where it is still naturally alive. And the day when this natural life is broken and Irish becomes everywhere a dead language must also be the day of death for the Gaelic Revival, however great the will to create anew. Now to force those who are abandoning Irish, who are ashamed of it, to re-adopt and honour it again, is a difficult work and one that needs a great effort. The League has not made much headway here, though it has good hope of success. In the South and in the East of Ireland the movement, on the contrary, is on the right road. Dublin, which fifteen years ago only possessed a dozen or so Gaelic speakers, now boasts of ten thousand.

The gentry are influenced by the movement, and they either incline to accept its teaching, or, by way of reaction, anglicise themselves once and for all. Converts to the League have been gained in great numbers even in Ulster ; Belfast has now a Gaelic Review, *Uladh*, and, like Dublin, an Irish Theatre. There are few *Feiseanna* more successful than those held in the frontier towns, washed by the river Bann, ordinarily the theatres of the most violent combats between Orangemen and Nationalists.

Since it is certain that any movement in Ireland that is supported by the priests is assured of success, it is a good augury that the Catholic clergy, the great moral force of the country, should be going with the tide. No doubt, the new tendencies are still resisted here and there, especially where the priest is of a certain age, and, having been brought up on other and somewhat reactionary ideas, lacks the quickness of mind or the courage necessary for the understanding and the propagation of a new point of view. On the other hand, the great seminary of Maynooth is to-day, with Dublin, the chief Gaelic centre in Ireland. Owing to the influence of the late Father O'Growney, and

now of Dr. O'Hickey, formerly Vice-President of the League, the young students of Maynooth have, during the last ten years, become passionate supporters of the old language. They give Irish entertainments, and publish an Irish annual, the organ of their Gaelic Union of St. Columba. Pastoral Letters are now communicated in Irish. A priest, in the West, sets himself to learn Irish, and in three years is able to preach in the language. It should be mentioned, too, that Cardinal Logue and the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Walsh, are, like a great number of their brethren on the episcopal bench, firm supporters of the Gaelic cause.

There are other encouraging signs which a traveller in Ireland may perceive at first sight, as, for instance, the number of people who speak Irish in the streets and even in cities such as Dublin, which a short while ago were thoroughly Anglicised. He will see signboards, announcements, advertisements, printed in Irish, Irish articles published every day in most of the newspapers, names of streets written up in Irish by order of the local authorities, who, moreover, often require of their employes a knowledge of the national language.[4] Further evidence he will find in the demand for Irish publications, such as the League's two periodicals, *An Claideamh Soluis* and *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*, and the Gaelic leaflets that appear in such abundance. He will also notice the pleiad of Gaelic societies that have risen by the side, and at the example of the League, such as *Cumann na nGaedheal*, the Separatist Society, and the Woman's Club, *Inghinidhe na hEireann* (Daughters of Erin), all of which have in

4 The Gaelic League hopes that in time public meetings, discussions, political and otherwise, may be held in Irish; that Irish may become the official language of government, of commerce and exchange. We are still far from this point, if it will ever be reached. Not long ago the Government used to put the law in motion, fine, and even sometimes imprison, people who had the audacity to write their names in Irish on the collars of their dogs or on their carts; the Post Office was a short while ago (and, perhaps, is still), at open war with the Gaelic League and its supporters on the question of addresses in Irish on parcels, luggage, etc. Let us hope that the Liberal Government will abandon such petty persecution.

view national revival on the basis of the national language and the return to Gaelic traditions.

But the stranger is most forcibly struck when he attends some Irish class in a poor quarter of Dublin, or even of London, and perceives how serious, deep, and infectious is the enthusiasm of the crowd, young and old, clerks and artisans for the most part—with an "intellectual" here and there—who are gathered together in the ill-lit hall. To these there is no doubt that the thought of learning anything, and above all of learning a language other than English, would never have occurred in other times, but now after their day's work, they sit here with an O'Growney in their hands, with shining eyes, and strained looks, greedily listening to the lesson, following with their lips, *con amore*, the soft speech of their teacher. Evidently here are people who have been transformed to the core of their being by this somewhat severe study, and by the importance of the social role which they wish to play, and which in fact they do play. Here, as elsewhere, the Gaelic movement has given an object, a goal, an ideal, to lives which, from their conditions, are often empty in these respects. Those who are in a position to know say indeed that few people of national feeling have taken up the study of Irish without being quickly aware of its strengthening and stimulating influence, without being fascinated by it as by a revelation. This shows that the language is for the children of Erin neither a dead language nor a strange one, but an integral part of their nature, a second self, an element of themselves that they had forgotten. The English which they speak with a remarkable native accent is, as has often been remarked, an English learnt from books, and full of absurd Irishisms which have remained locked up within their brains, a heritage of which they were not aware ; it is an English built artificially upon a Gaelic substructure. Even if one compares the eloquence of a Burke or a Grattan to that of a Pitt or a Fox, one is forced to avow that the one has in it something which the other

has not, something fictitious and studied. "Personally," writes Miss Eleanor Hull, Secretary of the Irish Texts Society of London, "I may say that the study of Irish exercises over me a fascination which I have never experienced in learning any other modern tongue, and I find that it has the same immense interest for our students here (in London) . . . It appears to exercise both an intellectual and moral influence over our students."[5]

Again an Irish lady student writes . . . . . "When I began to learn Irish, I felt as though the words were not unfamiliar to me, and my mind went out naturally to them. I felt as if they were drawing out of me something that I had not known was there. It seemed to me that till then I had not been myself, and was now finding myself; or that underlying what I had been there was another self with possibilities of thought and feeling and expression that I had been totally unconscious of."[6]

In this way one can understand the mental upheaval which is the accompaniment of the Irish language movement. The Irish mind which, in the fever of anglicisation formerly grew barren, discovers with its own mode of expression a new ardour and a new activity. The national language is an intellectual stimulant which widens and quickens the intelligence and shakes the soul to its depths . . . . . "The bulk of Irish minds (as the Gaelic League has, I think, conclusively proved)," writes Dr. Douglas Hyde, "can only be emotionalised through their own ancestral culture; but once emotionalised in

5 *Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission, Appendix to the Final Report*, p. 484. See in its entirety the letter of Miss Hull, author of *The Cuchullain Saga* (London 1899), and of several other works, in *The Irish Language and Irish Intermediate Education* (Gaelic League pamphlet No. 15).

6 *Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission, Appendix to the Final Report*, p. 484 (quoted by Dr. Hyde). *Cf. The Irish Language and Intermediate Education* (Gaelic League pamphlet No. 15), p. 6. See in *To-day and To-morrow in Ireland*, London 1903 (p. 87, *et seq.*), Mr. Stephen Gwynn's account of his studies at an Irish class in London taught by a policeman, a native of Kerry. At one time, Mr. O'Donnell, M.P., held an Irish class at Westminster for the benefit of his colleagues, of the Irish party. Mr. William O'Brien learnt Irish while in prison during the agrarian wars.

this way, they are open to many further impressions from without."[7]

Let it be added that if the man has made the language, the language in its turn has reacted upon the man. The national language embodies and enshrines the national genius, inspires it and propagates it, forms the national mind and determines the national atmosphere. Morality itself, by a curious psychological effect, is sensibly the gainer with the return of the old language, of the rich vocabulary which Celtic civilisation had created in its image and charged with force, beauty, and idealism, and which comes to-day to restore to new generations, with the spirit of the past, its traditional teaching and its moral "deposit." To take one example: Ireland possesses what England does not possess, a word meaning *patrie*. Must not this word when it sounds upon Irish lips revive a corresponding thought in Irish hearts? So in these days of coarse materialism, Gaelic is for the Gaels an intellectual stimulant and a moral antiseptic. In finding again her language Ireland finds again her soul. A new spirit indeed breathes with the spirit of the past through Erin, and this new spirit is all the more precious, say observers, in that it alone has power to fight against the evil of scepticism which is menacing Ireland. This is a malady of growth and, apart from the artificial and mechanical system of education that is in full vigour to-day, may result from an increase of material prosperity, and, consequently perhaps, from a decline of religious feeling.

III.—Anti-Celticism.

Nevertheless, a "new spirit" cannot yet be said to dominate Ireland. So far the League stands for a small minority only—influential though this minority be by reason of its enthusiasm and crusading strength.

[7] *University Commission, Evidence*, III., p. 318.

Marshalled on the other side is a large and indifferent majority: bourgeois and noblemen who have become too Anglicised to understand the profound significance of the movement; business-men who say that Irish has no commercial value,[1] and that an Irish-speaking Ireland would not be the richer by a penny, while remaining more than ever separated from the rest of the world; men of little faith, who see in the revival of a dead language but a fashion, a harmless pose; men of little energy, lovers of vain rhetoric or *raimeis* who ever confound speech with action; and lastly, politicians who, favourable though they may be to the new ideas, are, now and then, somewhat jealous of the League as of a power which claims without their help to be able to save the nation.

But this passive opposition is a slight matter compared to the irreducible hostility of a little knot of powerful and avowed anti-Celticists, the violence of whose assault has clearly shown that, in Ireland, if not in England, the enemies of the movement have well apprehended its significance though they may affect to ridicule it. Supported by a large portion of English opinion which is hardly more in sympathy now with things Celtic than it was half a century ago when the *Times* censured Matthew Arnold for his views on *The Study of Celtic Literature*,[2] their centre of operation in Ireland is the old University of Dublin, Trinity College. It was from the height of those venerable walls that war was declared eight or ten years ago, the propitious occasion being furnished by the meeting in Dublin of the Commission of Enquiry into secondary education.[3]

[1] Note, on the other hand, the conclusions arrived at in a memorandum published in 1905 by Mr. C. H. Oldham, the Head of the School of Commerce at Rathmines, and published under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. He recommends the teaching of Irish for the sake of the facility of acquisition of other living languages imparted by the study of Irish, which is the richest of modern languages alike from the grammatical and from the phonetic point of view.

[2] *The Study of Celtic Literature*, by Matthew Arnold, 1867, London.

[3] Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission, 1898 to 1899.

The attack was very lively. Here are the views of the most notable of the Irish anti-Celticists, especially Dr. Mahaffy, the illustrious scholar and Senior Fellow of Trinity College. "Artificially" to revive the Irish language, would be "a retrograde step, a return to the dark ages, to the Tower of Babel;" it would be a "mischievous" thing, if it were not, to begin with, an "impracticable thing." Modern Irish "is without educational value," and at the most some words of it may be "useful to a man fishing for salmon or shooting grouse in the West." To begin with, what is meant by "modern Irish"? "God knows," answers Mr. Atkinson, professor of philology in Trinity College. It is not a language, "not good enough for a *patois*. I should call it an *imbroglio*, *mélange*, an *omnium gatherum*." Taken as a whole, according to Professor Mahaffy, the Gaelic movement is a childish and factitious movement, merely a plaything for the people, invented by rebels who are trying to foment anti-British feeling, and to accentuate the separation between Ireland and England. and who know that Home Rule is "only a question of time provided they can nourish separation in sentiment, and revive the hitherto decreasing sense of contrast in race by establishing contrast in language." As to what is called Celtic Literature, Mr. Mahaffy has no expression strong enough for its condemnation; he affirms, on the authority of those who know, that outside religious writings there are no Irish writings which are not either "silly or indecent." His colleague, Mr. Atkinson, upholds him with his authority in declaring that all this old literature is "almost intolerably low in tone." "Never," he says, "let your children be brought into contact with this." And he adds, in conclusion, this phrase, extraordinary indeed in the mouth of a philologist: "All folk-lore is at the bottom abominable."[4]

4 See Dr. Mahaffy's and Dr. Atkinson's Evidence in the *Appendix* to the *Final Report* Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission, Dublin, 1899, p. 31 *et seq.*, 637 *et seq.* *Cf.* the article by Dr. Mahaffy, *The Recent*

The effect of this criticism was not such as their authors expected. "Its own very lack of moderation condemns it." So wrote Professor Zimmer, of Greifswald, one of the European philologists whose testimony, with that of Dottin of Rennes, Windisch of Leipzig, Stern of Berlin, H. Pedersen of Copenhagen, and others, was invoked by the Gaelic party in Ireland to refute the attacks of the anti-Celticists of Trinity College. All these scholars did full homage to the ancient literature of Ireland. Moreover they recognised the philological richness of the modern Irish language, its educational value and its importance from the point of view of higher Celtic studies.[5] In reality the attacks of the anti-Celticists were made for reasons which were far more political than literary. It was hoped, as Mr. Mahaffy said, "to kill with ridicule," to kill the Irish language itself, and thus stop at all costs this Gaelic movement which had sprung up so untowardly at the eleventh hour to thwart the great work of the Anglicisation of Ireland. Now what surer means could there be of killing the language than by the exclusion

Fuss about the Irish Language in the *Nineteenth Century Review*, August, 1899, from which we have made various extracts.

5 See the extracts from the letters of foreign scholars quoted by Dr. Hyde in his Evidence before the Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission, pp. 485 and 487. See letters in full in the *Gaelic League Pamphlets*, Nos. 15 and 16.

We may quote from these witnesses notably on the subject of the educational value of the Irish language for the youth of Ireland.

Dr. Zimmer of Greifswald recalls how Frederick the Great said of the Niebelungen, that such pitiable work, *elendes Zeug*, was not worth a single charge of powder, and did not deserve to be drawn out of the dust of oblivion. He continues as follows: "With regard to the Irish language as a subject of instruction in the Intermediate Education system of Ireland, I know of no other modern language which, regarded purely as a language, possesses a higher educational value than modern Irish for a boy who knows English. Practically, and from the point of view of modern literature, a knowledge of French or German to him, outside of Ireland, would certainly be more valuable, but for thorough education and schooling of the mind (*i.e.*, of the intellect) Irish stands at the very least on a level with the two above-named languages; in fact it is in very many respects superior to them, because it is more characteristic and consequently gives more matter for thought . . . ."

Dr. Windisch of Leipzig pointed out the value of Irish in that it must help to maintain in the Irish people their intellectual characteristics. *Cf.* also the opinions of M. Georges Dottin, of the University of Rennes.

of it from the system of education? In practice, therefore, it was this question of the teaching of Irish in the schools and colleges that was to bring about the battle, and round which, in fact, the battle has raged between the anti-Celticists on the one side who wish to Anglicise the education of the children, andthe pioneers of the Gaelic Renaissance on the other, who wish to nationalise education as all else, and more than all else. This battle must, in the long run, determine the failure or success of the movement, and decide whether a national spirit or its reverse shall exist in the next generation.

Now, it must be noticed, that on this domain of education the anti-Celticists had the advantage over their adversaries by reason of the predominant position of their leaders on the central Boards, the Board of National Education and the Board of Intermediate Education. Controlling the syllabuses and finances through these Boards, they control the entire school system of Ireland, higher education alone excepted. These two Boards we have said, tried to ignore, and to make the Irish ignore, all that concerns Ireland, her history, her language; they discouraged the teaching of Irish to the limits of their power without daring actually to prohibit it. For ten years they have on this account experienced the League's attacks. They have yielded when they were forced to yield; when an opportunity has occurred, they have taken back their concessions, so that in the end the League, if it has gained ground, has gained it but slowly and with much difficulty. An example may be given with reference to secondary education. In 1901, following the nomination of Mr. Mahaffy to membership of the Board of Intermediate Education—a nomination that was resented as a personal insult by all Gaelic Ireland—this Board, without daring frankly to deny Irish a place in the school syllabus, fixed its value far below that of French, and especially that of German. When the League raised an outcry and led a campaign to secure the equality of Irish with English, or at least with French

and German, the Board beat a retreat, but none the less in 1904 they excluded Irish from the Mathematical and Experimental Science Courses. Moreover, German was now favoured, at the expense of French, by special prizes, to the great indignation of the Irish, who were furious at the attempt that was made, they said, to " Teutonise " them ! In the primary schools, on the other hand, the League gained a victory in 1901, when it secured that Irish teaching (which had indeed stood on the syllabus since 1878, but was a dead letter)[6] should be given to the children as an optional *extra*, either in school hours or outside of them, and that in this latter case the teachers should be paid proportionally.[7] Soon, however, the Board practically negatived its first concession by a new circular. This resulted, on March 15th, 1904, in a defeat of the Unionists on a division in the House of Commons—a unique event in the ten years' reign of that Government. Shortly afterwards, in 1905, the British Treasury attempted, on its own authority, to deprive the Irish teachers of their right to remuneration for the teaching of Irish. Not until the Liberal Government came into office was this study restored even to its former inadequate position.[8]

The most serious question, still hanging in suspense, is that of primary education in those districts where Irish is still the current language. Here teaching is given in English, not because the teacher is forbidden to use Irish, but because he is generally ignorant of it.[9] What

6 Irish might be taught from 1878 as an extra subject but outside school hours, and only to children in the Fifth and Sixth classes, that is to say, in the higher classes, which contain scarcely any pupils, since the children leave the school before reaching them. The conditions were practically the same as those for the teaching of Latin.

7 The payment was 10s. per scholar, but it was only allowed when the teaching was given outside school hours, and was not allowed at all for standards below the fourth.

8 From the 1st of July, 1906, remuneration has been allotted to the teacher for each child who learns Irish at the rate of 1s. or 2s. 6d., according to the class. This rate is very insufficient.

9 From 1883 a note added to Rule No. 40 of the National Board allows and advises teachers and inspectors to use Irish to Irish-speaking children. But of what use is this when the teachers and inspectors do not know Irish ?

the League demands with equal energy and reason is that education should be made bilingual in such districts, that is to say, that without the exclusion of English, Irish should be kept in the programme, and that the teacher should acquire the habit of using it in teaching the children English and elementary subjects. The actual state of things is a scandal, for it is a scandal to teach children in a language which for them is a foreign language. Professor Atkinson, that extreme anti-Celticist, has declared, "It is wrong to children not to teach them in their own mother-tongue."[10] Does not bilingual teaching succeed wonderfully in Wales? Watch the morose and worried faces of these small school-boys. They do not understand what is said to them, for an English word pronounced by the master awakens no clear idea in their tiny heads. Sitting motionless on the bench they learn nothing, and never open their mouths. Such a system only creates illiterates. And that is what in these districts is called education! All competent people agree in condemning the system. In the year 1900 two hundred managers, representing 1,200 schools in the West of Ireland, presented a Memorial of protest to the Board responsible for this condition of affairs; but no progress was made until Mr. Wyndham, as Chief Secretary for Ireland under the Conservative Government, on the 22nd of May, 1901, supported and had passed in the House of Commons a motion in favour of the bilingual programme, and testified himself to the necessity of enlarging and enlightening the mind of the child by this means. In 1904, the Board of National Education came to reason and issued a fairly good programme of bilingual teaching for the Irish-speaking districts. But the Board has not so far let itself be persuaded to make this programme obligatory and to see that it is effectively applied, or to secure that a sufficient number of Irish-

[10] See a series of quotations from Professors and Teachers on this subject in the Gaelic League Pamphlet No. 2, p. 3 *et seq.* *Cf.* Dr. Hyde, *Literary History of Ireland*, p. 631.

speaking teachers are turned out of the Training Colleges.[11] To all claims it opposes the strength of inertia, and this strength of inertia may well, one day, cost it dear, as was the case with the Board of Intermediate Education for its hatred of Irish. The ill-will of these two authorities has, indeed, raised up against them a violent movement of hostility. On every side there is a cry for the abolition of these anti-National, irresponsible, and autocratic Boards. As for the Boards, they are groups of amateurs, dominated by the spirit of Trinity College, and recruited, as has been shown, rather from judges, clergymen and wealthy bourgeois, than from competent men. "Will the people of Ireland," asked Mr. Edward Martyn a short time ago, "allow this farce to be played any longer?"

The language war, therefore, continues to rage in Ireland just as sharply as in Poland, in Bohemia, or in Alsace. Who will win? The League, or the Boards upheld by Trinity College? Anti-Celticism or the Gaelic revival? If Ireland wills it, the victory will be hers beyond all doubt. Certainly no one can doubt it who observes the ardour of her youth in the study of the national language, and who knows, to speak in figures, that there are now 2,551 Primary schools (1906) teaching Irish as against 105 in 1899; 95,487 children (1904) learning Irish in the schools as against 1,371 in 1899; 2,800 entrants for the Irish examinations of the Intermediate Board in 1905, as against 272 in 1899; or a total number in all of 100,000 children and pupils studying the national language in Ireland.[12]

[11] Gaelic Ireland ought to provide for herself satisfactory teachers from her own point of view. She has now four Training Colleges which give certificates of competence to teach Irish.

[2] In many dioceses and counties, notab y in those of Wexford, Killala and Mayo, the ecclesiastical managers have undertaken to engage only Irish speakers as teachers.

There still remains the question of higher education. There is in existence in Ireland no Chair of Irish History. There are three or four Chairs of the Irish language, one in Trinity College, founded by the "Society for the Evangelical Education of the Irish by means of their National Language" and the holders of this Chair have always

IV.—The Literary Awakening.

There is more in the Gaelic Renaissance than the revival of the language, which is but a token and a means. It is not surprising that this revival should have provoked all over the country—or rather that there should have occurred all over the country, along with the Gaelic Renaissance and under the same influences—a remarkable flight of the intellectual aspirations of the individual. We see in Ireland to-day the first signs of a new and genuine literary movement :[1] a movement which is the result and the witness, as is the language revival itself, of the efforts that are being made by the nation to reconquer its mental and moral independence, and the success of which appears necessary if that of the language revival is to be assured. For it is evident that this Renaissance could not come to fruition if it were not ceaselessly sustained and vivified by contact with the national literature. Certainly we must be careful for the present not to exaggerate the results which we may expect from this intellectual awakening of Ireland. But it is necessary to note the results which already lie before our eyes.

It was by a return to the sources of old Celtic literature that this movement started, now twenty or thirty years ago. Ireland had possessed during the nineteenth century archaeologists and philologists who brought to life the treasures and the literary splendour of past times. The names of O'Curry and O'Donovan enjoyed, in the

been members of this propagandist society. The Gaelic League rightly insists that any new University, if it is to be national, must comprise the teaching of the language, literature, history and archaeo ogy of Ire and. The League has already begun to organise on its own account a series of examinations in the Gaelic literature and language. (*Cf.* the institution known as the *Fleming Companionship* organised by the Gaelic Leaguers of Cork).

[1] Ireland had no lack of poets and thinkers in the 19th century, but what is new to-day is the growth of a literary school derived, perhaps, from that of Davis and Young Ireland, but very different in many respects and, from the literary point of view, much superior.

middle of the nineteenth century, European celebrity, but these scholars lived in Ireland, isolated and ignored.[2] Their work did not attract the attention of a country which was then in the throes of famine and agitation. In this connection, Matthew Arnold tells a significant anecdote. Thomas Moore, the poet, having gone to see O'Curry, found his friend with the archaeologist Petrie, at work, before a collection of old Irish MSS., the *Book of Ballymote*, the *Yellow Book of Lecan*, the *Annals of the Four Masters*. Arnold describes the astonishment of Moore, who had never heard of these documents, and who, when their character was explained to him, gravely remarked : " Petrie, these volumes were not written by fools, or with foolish intentions, and I had no right to undertake my History of Ireland in ignorance of them."[3] Things have changed now. For thirty years a strong national current has been running in favour of the study, the translation, and the popularisation of the ancient texts, and a new value has been set upon the unexploited wealth of Irish folk-lore. What Lady Charlotte Guest had done for Wales, what Campbell of Islay had done and what Mr. Alfred Nutt is doing for Scotland, many have tried to do for Ireland, such as Dr. P. W. Joyce, Standish O'Grady, Larminie, O'Donoghue, Dr. Sigerson, Lady Gregory, and Dr. Hyde himself.[4] The latter has spent many years in Roscommon, his native county, and in the other Western counties, where he has gathered from the lips of the peasants popular stories and songs, new and old, and in them has found material for a dozen volumes.

2 O'Curry was a Professor in the Catholic University under the Rectorate of Newman. O'Donovan died in 1861, and O'Curry in 1862.

3 Matthew Arnold, *Study of Celtic Literature, II.*

4 See P. W. Joyce, *Old Celtic Romances* (1879), etc. Larminie, *West Irish Folk Tales* (1898). George Sigerson, *Bards of the Gael and Gall* (1897). Standish Hayes O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica* (1892). Standish O'Grady (not to be confounded with the foregoing), *Finn and His Companions, The Coming of Cuchulain*, etc. Lady Gregory, *Poets and Dreamers* (1903), *Cuchulain of Muirthemne, Gods and Fighting Men.* The principal works of Douglas Hyde, *Literary History of Ireland* (1899), *Beside the Fire* (1889), *Love Songs of Connacht* (1894), *Religious Songs of Connacht* (1906), *Leabhar Sgeuluidheachta, Sgeuluidhe Gaodhalach, Three Sorrows of Story Telling.*

More recently still, there has been in Ireland an active encouragement of the higher Celtic studies. The tradition had been lost since O'Donovan and O'Curry,[5] and it is this tradition which a new group of Irish Celtic scholars, Hyde, Strachan, Sweet, Meyer, Bergin, Dinneen, and others, have been trying to regain. These scholars are aware of the advantages which a knowledge of modern Irish gives in the study of Celtic philology, and they are conscious also of the power which will be added to the Gaelic Renaissance if a fine school of Celtic learning comes into existence in Ireland. Chairs of Philology, Phonetics, and Irish Paleography have been founded, and three years ago, thanks to the generous help of Mrs. J. R. Green, a woman as patriotic as she is enlightened, a school for Higher Celtic Study was opened in Dublin under the auspices of Professors Strachan and Kuno Meyer.

Irish[6] literature is thus discovering, little by little, an imaginative vein of great wealth The first results accrued not to Irish literature, properly speaking, but rather to that Anglo-Irish school which had, with writers like Miss Edgeworth, Charles Lever, Carleton, and up to a certain point with Thomas Moore himself, been drawing for the first half of the nineteenth century closer and closer to English models and to the taste of the English public. Thomas Davis and the lofty thinkers of Young Ireland had, it is true, tried to infuse into Irish literature a really patriotic and national spirit ; but though their influence is very marked in the lyric poetry of a Clarence Mangan, in the epic poetry of a Samuel Ferguson, in the political poetry of a T. D. Sullivan, or in the revolutionary poetry of a Kickham, or an Ellen O'Leary, their work was too soon interrupted to bear its full fruit. Ireland has taken up again the broken thread of this work, as if in tardy

[5] It is only fair to say that Hennessy, Todd and Reeves, in this interval, maintained the honour of Celtic Studies in Ireland. But there is an immense and unexplored wealth of MSS. still untouched in Ireland itself. In the Irish Academy at Dublin 1,500 MSS. are waiting to be published, and even to be catalogued.

[6] *The School of Irish Learning*, which publishes a review, *Eriu*, on the model of the *Revue Celtique*.

response to the teachings of Davis. With the foundation by Sir C. G. Duffy, the friend and collaborator of Davis, of the *Dublin Magazine* in 1887, and a little while after with the formation of two Irish Literary Societies, one in London and the other in Dublin, a new breath of life passed through Anglo-Irish literature. This literature is now steeped in the sources of inspiration of the poems and legends of the past; it echoes that "Celtic note" which had so profoundly influenced Swinburne and Tennyson, and is blossoming forth in a splendid florescence of poetry. Standish O'Grady, T. W. Rolleston, Larminie, Miss Nora Hopper give new life and form to the old myths, following thus in the traces of Sir Samuel Ferguson and Aubrey De Vere. George Sigerson and Douglas Hyde have translated old Irish poetry into English with an admirable wealth and suppleness of rhythm. Ethna Carbery and P. J. M'Call sing of the hopes and sorrows of Erin; Jane Barlow, A. P. Graves, Nora Hopper, Katharine Tynan Hinkson write of nature and of country life; and all these various poetical currents meet finally in the person of a master, an incomparable artist, W. B. Yeats.[7]

It cannot be said, indeed, that these writers of the Anglo-Irish literary renaissance—with certain exceptions, notably Sigerson and Hyde—conform invariably to the spirit and form of Celtic literature, or represent the intimate genius of Ireland. Several of them evidently write for the English public. Ireland is for them a subject for study rather than an element of their personality. Some of them like Lionel Johnson, and George W. Russell (A.E.) push the idealism of the Celtic mind to

7 It does not come within the scope of this work to give even a sketch of the new Anglo-Irish literary movement. We can only mention a few names of living as well as dead writers. See for this pleiad of poets *The Treasury of Irish Poetry* by Stopford Brooke and Rolleston (London, 1900); and the Collection of *New Songs*, a lyric Selection by "A. E." (Dublin, 1903). See also on Yeats, two articles published by M. Potez in the *Revue de Paris* on the 1st and 15th August (1904). Among prose writers we may mention the names of Julia Crotty, Edward Martyn, Seumas MacManus, Shan Bullock, etc.

the mystical borders of symbolism and Neo-Platonism. It cannot be denied, however, that the literary wealth of ancient Ireland has been used to good purpose in Ireland's intellectual renaissance. Irish minds have been set at work, and given a field for their activities. It is a sign of the times that Dublin has become again an intellectual centre, strong enough to draw Mr. George Moore to it for a time from London, which he found too rich and too large, and from the London public, whose taste he found too bourgeois. With his help, Mr. Yeats and Lady Gregory founded in Dublin, about twelve years ago, an Irish Literary Theatre.

It was no easy thing to organise a theatre that should be at once national and literary in Dublin, where for a long time the public was accustomed to see only those plays which had had a London success. It is true that, to begin with, the efforts were modest. A series of plays on Irish subjects and of a national spirit were given each year in a local hall. From the beginning subscriptions came in quickly, and on the list of its patrons were to be found representatives of the most different classes of society. Side by side with the name of the great agitator, William O'Brien, was to be found that of the Chief Justice of Ireland, Lord O'Brien ; the Ex-Fenian, John O'Leary, stood side by side in the list with a former Ambassador of His Brittanic Majesty in Paris, Lord Dufferin. Finally, in May, 1899, the first performance was given with Mr. Yeats' *Countess Cathleen*, a play full of verve and power. Unfortunately it was not sufficiently Irish in character, and offence was taken at certain over-realistic pictures of peasant life. On the other hand, real successes of that year and the following years were Edward Martyn's *Heather Field* ; George Moore's *Bending of the Bough*, a very effective political satire; a symbolical play of Martyn's called *Maeve* ; and a fine drama written round the legend of Diarmuid and Grania by George Moore and W. B. Yeats. In 1904, thanks to the generous initiative of an Englishwoman, Miss Horniman, the newly-

established Irish National Theatre Society found a home in the Abbey Theatre, and advanced from occasional to regular, if not to continuous, performances. Here many plays were successfully produced, amongst others, an historical drama by Lady Gregory, *Kincora*; a dramatic poem by Yeats, *The Shadowy Waters*; a sombre tragi-comedy by Synge, *The Shadow of the Glen*; a play with a purpose by Padraic Colum, *The Land*; not to mention numerous little comedies, farces and moralities, such as Yeats' *Hour-Glass*, or that moving national allegory by the same author, *Kathleen-ni-Houlihan*.[8]

The unfortunate thing was that by these plays, written in English, the Irish National Theatre did not clearly prove its right to the first of its names. The plays, the poetry, and the novels, of the Anglo-Irish group of writers were not essentially Irish or Gaelic. Foreign influences, notably Ibsen and Maeterlinck, and even our French decadents were preponderant. Even to-day one cannot help finding something artificial in this literature that is so young in its romanticism, but so advanced in its subtle art and studied symbolism. The English form is superimposed upon a thought that is not English, but is a treasury of that modernised " Celticism " the charm and penetration of which were revealed to English readers by Matthew Arnold half a century ago. It is an orchestra of new instruments seeking to adjust itself to a very ancient music, the key and notation of which are lost, a music of which these modern players can give but their personal interpretation. We may go further and say that an Irish literature, properly speaking, is not possible in the English language, except in the case of those popular ballads and political poetry in which Young Ireland excelled. Is not an Anglo-Irish literature fated

8 The Irish National Theatre Company, under the direction of the Messrs. Fay, actors themselves, have already given many performances in London. See in the *Débats* of the 19th April, 1905, the eminent critic, Augustin Filons' appreciation of one of their performances. *Cf.* Mr. Walkley's, of the London *Times*, criticism in the *Temps* of the 25th July, 1904. See also Mr. Yeats' annual publication *Samhain*.

from its birth to be but a transitory and diverted stream of the great river of Anglo-Saxon literature ? It is certain that the new school, great and well-earned as has been its success, is even in Ireland limited in its appeal, and passes over the heads of the masses, who fail to comprehend it.[9]

Proof of this was given on a certain evening in October, 1901, when the Irish Theatre gave its first performance in the Irish tongue. This was an Irish comedy by Douglas Hyde, *Casadh an tSugain* (The Twisting of the Rope),[10] a slight comedy of manners dealing with Irish country life in the past, but the occasion was the first in which an Irish play was played in Irish in an Irish theatre. It was a night of unprecedented enthusiasm ! During the intervals the gallery struck up old Irish songs, while the parterre answered with applause. It seemed to everyone present as though a new day had come after a long night, as though a visible and material sign of the revival of Irish literature had been manifested.

Irish literature, as is known, had its bright period even as early as the time of Geoffrey Keating, poet, historian, and founder of modern Irish (1570-1640).[11] It was in his day also that the *Annals of the Four Masters* were compiled.[12] Later, the poets of the eighteenth century,

9 The current reproach against the new Anglo-Irish school is that it gives a picture of the Irish peasant which, while different from the stage Irishman of the past, is neither less false nor more agreeable. The outbreak provoked by Mr. Yeats' *Countess Cathleen* was lately renewed in connection with Mr. J. M. Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*—a comedy dealing with Western peasant life—and a heated controversy ensued in the newspapers.

10 See translation in *Samhain*, 1901.

11 Geoffrey Keating, a priest, suffered during his life from English persecutions. He was the first to write the then spoken language (Modern Irish, which followed Middle Irish, as Middle Irish had in the 11th and 12th centuries followed Old Irish), as literature. *The Three Shafts of Death*, by Keating, was edited in 1890 by Professor Atkinson. The same has been done for his poetry by Father MacErlean at the instance of the Gaelic League, in 1900. His *History of Ireland* was translated into English about 1723 by D. O'Connor, and is about to be published again under the auspices of the Irish Texts Society of London. Keating had, as a contemporary historian, MacFirbis.

12 *The Annals of the Four Masters* (1636), a collection of historical MSS., compilations, etc., are the work of a Franciscan, Michael O'Clery,

those Tyrtaeans, O'Rahilly, MacDonnell, O'Sullivan,[13] sang in popular verse of the troubles of Ireland. They continued the tradition of the old classical bards, without possessing, however, their scholarly and complicated prosody. By the end of the eighteenth century this creative activity had little by little died out, the Penal Laws helping to crush it ; and in the nineteenth century we find in Ireland but peasant poets, who give free play to their rustic inspiration.[14] Would the revival of the Gaelic tongue bring in its train a revival of Gaelic literature ? The question may still be asked. The most ardent apostles of the Gaelic movement were at first content to publish the yet unprinted works of Keating and his successors,[15] or (as has been done of late in Provence), to edit in a literary form those popular legends which for centuries had been orally transmitted from father to son in peasant families. These redactions soon ceased to satisfy ; the

helped by three other archaeologists. They are the only Irish annals which, written entirely in Irish, contain no Latin. They were edited by O'Donovan, 1848 to 1851.

[13] The works of these three poets have been recently edited by Father Dinneen for the Irish Texts Society and the Gaelic League. The oldest of them, O'Rahilly, chiefly wrote lamentations and elegies on the ruin of Ireland. He is the most interesting from the literary point of view. In MacDonnell, 1691 to 1754, the Jacobite poet *par excellence*, we find chiefly political satires, and it is strange to find one against Philip, Regent of France. O'Sullivan, the youngest, who led a very disordered life, bore witness to the relaxation of the Penal Laws and prophesied a happier era for Ireland. These three names are the best known, but Ireland then possessed a great number of popular bards who went from village to village and were maintained by the peasants, whose hearts they cheered. The last schools of the bards, the depositories of that old Irish metre, which was so complex, artificial, and meshed in rules, had disappeared in the first half of the seventeenth century, with the political organisation of the clans, and poetry, escaping from the traditional forms, became freer and more popular. (For the bardic schools, see Dr. Hyde's *Literary History of Ireland*, p. 239, *et seq.*, 144, *et. seq.* For the poets at the end of the 18th century see *Ib.*, p. 591 *et seq.*).

[14] Such was Raftery, the blind poet of Mayo, whose works have recently been edited by Douglas Hyde.

[15] See the numerous publications of the Irish Texts Society of London and the Gaelic League.

Ubhla de'n Chraoib is the title of a collection of Irish poetry by Hyde. Lady Gregory has translated some of them in *Poets and Dreamers*, Dublin (1903). Compare the article by George Moore in the *Nineteenth Century* of February, 1901.

need to create anew was quickly felt, the need to express in Gaelic words and images the rejuvenated forms of the national spirit. Already Ireland has discovered her Mistral in Douglas Hyde, *An Craoibinn Aoibhinn,* who is a poet as well as a prophet, and writes with simple pathos on nature, solitude and the life of the fields. His work, it is said, may be compared, for its pure idealism, to the best lyric poetry that has been produced in England during the last ten years. After his first dramatic success, Dr. Hyde gained others with a Nativity play, *Drama Breithe Chriosta* ; a short mystery, *Naomh Ar Iarraidh* ; and a little comedy, *An Posadh,* in which the adventures of the poet Raftery, are described.[16] Round him a group of Irish writers, poets, story-tellers, dramatists, have gradually grown up : O'Neill Russell, P. T. MacGinley, John MacNeill, J. J. Doyle, Agnes O'Farrelly, Eamonn O'Neill, Father Dineen, the author of an historical novel, *Cormac O Conaill* ; Father O'Leary, the author of the novel, *Seadhna,* and that very successful little comedy, *Tadhg Saor* ; P. J. O'Shea, who, with his *Aodh O Neill* entered the field of historical drama. There are to-day in Ireland a great number of Irish writers to whom the thought of writing a line in English would never have occurred. Irish plays are performed all over the country. In Dublin there is not enough Irish type to satisfy the demands of a public which is hungry for Irish literature. All this literature is, it must be noticed popular literature. So it must be with the first productions of a new art. Its strength and the conditions of its success lie in the fact that it is of the people themselves.

Ireland has thus at last come to understand what sort of a fool's paradise she had been living in when she had hoped to attain national culture on the basis of a foreign language. She now knows that Anglo-Irish literature, however perfect it might be, could be but an expedient by the way, a means whereby the creation of an art that

[16] Many of these little plays have been translated in the annual review, *Samhain.*

should be, properly speaking, Irish, might become possible. For a people's genius can expand freely only in the mother-tongue, and the Irish language alone is capable of rendering with fidelity, the shades, the ideals, and the secrets of Ireland's soul, of that soul in whose image it has been created, and in the image of which it is about to create in return a new literature.

What will be the future outcome of this Gaelic literary renaissance? We must be careful not to prophesy. We must be careful not to draw too rapid conclusions from the natural comparisons suggested between the Gaelic movement and similar movements, Czech or Polish, Provençal or Flemish.

It is certain that positive obstacles exist in the way of a renaissance of Gaelic literature. We are not now thinking solely of the difficulty presented by the language itself, which, from the philological point of view, is so expressive, so profound, so admirable, with its regular syntax, its exceedingly rich vocabulary,[17] and the extraordinary facility which it offers for the formation of new words.[18] Neither are we thinking of the difficulty presented by its very logical orthography, which is so little phonetic that one might imagine Ireland, from century to century, to have taken a scholar's pleasure in seeing it grow bristly with complications[19] The true

[17] The modern Irish vocabulary possesses nearly 80,000 words (Hebrew has but 4,000). The Irish also boast that their language possesses a marvellous prosody which was created by a spontaneous evolution and is not at all imitative, and which constitutes to-day an incomparable literary treasure (rhyme, as is known, is of Irish invention).

[18] The necessity of expressing in Irish modern inventions such as the railway or the telephone is indeed an existing difficulty. The Irish should do what the Germans have been doing for fifty years, to exclude the importation of foreign words (thus for instance they call a telephone, *Fernsprecher*, a ticket *Fahrschein*, etc.). A short time ago a series of lectures on Chemistry was delivered in Irish. Douglas Hyde, *Story of Early Gaelic Literature*, 1903, p. xx.

[19] In spite of the archaic orthography of the English language, it appears almost phonetic in comparison with Irish orthography. The pronunciation and the phonetics of Irish have lately been the object of very careful and useful study, for instance, Dottin's *Etudes sur la prononciation actuelle d'un dialecte irlandais*, *Revue Celtique*, 1893. Hayden, *Irish Pronunciation*. Dublin, 1895, etc.

difficulty lies elsewhere. A literary and classical language must be created out of the various dialects actually in use, each of which (and there are three principal dialects), claims pre-eminence. It must be said that there is little difference between these dialects and that each of them is understood outside its locality. Their existence is due to the prolonged interval during which Gaelic literature ceased to be printed, and there is no sensible deviation in any of them from the standard fixed by Keating. Will that standard of the seventeenth century be re-adopted to-day? Or, on the other hand will one of the existing dialects be accepted as the standard? The literary language will probably be formed by a natural process, according as there is an increase in communication, spoken or written, between the various provinces; and, above all, when a modern Gaelic literature by its success has made its own laws, then a Gaelic Academy will intervene and register those rules and customs already imposed by use. The difficulty is not of the sort which the will of a whole people cannot overcome. Is not the spirit stronger than the letter? And, moreover, has not the old Celtic world something to say to modern times through the voice of its legitimate heir? Has not the new Ireland acquired by persecution, as she has received through tradition, the right and the duty of preaching to the modern world a lesson of idealism, of combating the two scourges of intellectual life to-day, materialism and rationalism? On the day when that voice makes itself heard, bringing its message of idealism, tenderness, and beauty, it will sound nowhere more sweetly than in the heart of France, and France will then remember the Celtic blood which moves in her veins.[20]

[20] The Gaelic Revival has not only a literary side but also a musical one—proof of this is shown by the success of the Feis Ceoil Association and its annual musical festival (Feis Ceoil) in Dublin. The Irish hope that the day will come when Ireland will produce a school of art worthy of the illuminators of the *Book of Kells* (8th century), of the makers of of Brooch of Tara (9th century), and of the Bell of St. Patrick (12th century).

V.—Social Results.

Time alone will tell if the movement is to affirm itself in literature as it has affirmed itself in the national language and in education. And should it be so, will its work be over? Will its influence be confined to the intellectual domain? Surely not! After all, language and literature are but signs of a psychological revival based upon the national factor. That revival must also manifest itself in other directions. It first manifested itself in things spiritual, but it will react most certainly upon things temporal, for the latter are, to a great extent, functions of the former, the economic and social condition of a people depending largely upon their psychological and moral condition. This is very clearly recognised by the promoters of the movement when they demonstrate the great value, not only moral, but economic and social, of the national idea, above and beyond politics. What we need, they say, is not so much new laws as a reform from within which shall thoroughly regenerate the character of the individual Irishman who, outside of Ireland, can make his way so well and yet who in the mother-country seems deprived of all energy and all desire for progress, and looks to the State for aid in everything, as though in his pessimism he despaired in advance of ever seeing anything succeed in Ireland. Let us restore to him his language and his tradition, let us attach him again to the national idea, to the idea of national duty. Then his soul will be reanimated with a proud patriotism, with a sense of dignity; initiative will be stimulated within him, and he will have confidence and an ambition to work for Ireland. In a word, the first conditions of all prosperity will come into existence. This is what we may expect of the Irish revival from a material and practical point of view.

And the first signs of this are now being seen in Ireland. The first symptoms appear in social life, in the customs

and manners of the middle class and the people, where the interesting process of de-Anglicisation has begun. Shoneens and West Britons are not so happy as of yore. They no longer feel themselves to be in a conquered land. They find themselves, on the contrary, put to shame by the Irish-Irelanders, and taken to task by the satirical newspapers. A press campaign, a campaign of speech and of action, has been organised to break down the tyranny of English fashion and amusements, to free opinion from the ways and conventions of English life. This campaign is favoured by the success which has attended the Irish entertainments, organised by the League, all over the country, such as the *Seilge*, the *Sgoruidheachta*, and the *Feiseanna*, whose reforming influence cannot be esteemed too highly. Already, cricket is being abandoned for the Celtic national game, hurling, a game which was formerly played in France under the name of "La Crosse." Societies for Gaelic games are developing (as for instance, the Gaelic Athletic Association). Colleges and convents are being transformed and their life made more national. And as a visible sign of the progress of the movement, some Irishmen are following the example of the son of a former Lord Chancellor of Ireland and have taken to wearing, on certain occasions, the National kilt, or else the ancient dress of the Celts and Gaels—consisting of trews fastened to the legs with thongs, a tunic caught in with a leather belt, and a brath or coloured sash thrown across the shoulder.

What, from the practical point of view, is of more importance is the industrial revival which is looked for and which already may be seen as an outcome of the Gaelic movement.[1] Of all the evils from which the country suffers there is none graver than this absence of industries, and the result is that from lack of employment the Irish are leaving the country in a ceaseless stream. The chief blame must be laid at the doors of the capitalists

[1] *Cf.* the following chapter. The annual Oireachtas comprises an industrial section.

and the consumers. The former invest their money outside Ireland instead of making work with it at home. Had they any public spirit or sense of Irish interests and national honour, such as the Irish revival tends to give them, they would interest themselves in the economic development of the country, and help Ireland and Irish labour with their cosmopolitan capital. The consumers, on their side, purchase by preference foreign, that is to say, English produce. The domination of English fashion, and the contempt for Irish goods cost Ireland, as we have already said, some £20,000,000 sterling year in and year out. But now the Irish revival has declared war upon imported produce to the great advantage, not only of the consumer, who is freed from the yoke of an imitative slavery to England, but of the producer also, whose business improves, and of the workman, who has a chance of so much more work. Preference for Irish goods! The cry flies from mouth to mouth, and associations for the industrial development of Ireland are being formed everywhere. Historical precedents are recalled—the young patriots of a Dublin club, it is remembered, swore in 1703, never again to honour as a toast, or to call beautiful, a woman who wore French lace or foreign *fanfreluches*. Dean Swift's saying is heard again: "Burn everything that comes from England except her coal." There is a desire to imitate the great forerunners who, at the time of the American war in 1779, united to proscribe English goods, and in one year reduced English importations from £2,000,000 to £595,000 sterling.

All this tends to develop industry and therefore to ameliorate the economic condition of the population of the towns. The Irish revival tends also to improve the condition of the country people, and always by means of the same principle:—that the important point is to give back to the children of Erin, belief in Erin, confidence in their own energy, and to concentrate upon Irish soil the ambitions which to-day are turned towards Liverpool

or Chicago. It is the country districts which suffer most from the emigration scourge. Those who remain here are the feeble and the dreamers, those who emigrate are the strong and the young. The nation in losing these loses the best part of its life blood. Now the economic fact of emigration is not solely due to the vices of the land system, not even to the need of industries in Ireland ; it is due also to the contagion of Anglicisation, to the psychological condition which it is not easy to imagine when one has not been there and seen the sadness, the mortal melancholy of the life of the peasants as it has been for fifty years while Anglicisation has reigned supreme. Think of the conditions in those desolate lands of the West where the rainy sky covers only stone and rock, peat-bog and marsh ! Think of the mental state of that peasantry of old Celtic blood whose quick and delicate spirit, and rich imagination, make them, perhaps, the most intellectual of their class in Europe ! An Irish Review gave them, a short time ago, the fine name of peasant thinkers and poets.[2] The landlord is exacting, famine always a menace, and, all the year long, man has before his eyes only unkindly nature and the agony of silence and of loneliness. Formerly, as a consolation, the Irish peasant fell back on the *alibi* of his inner life, his poetical taste, his traditions of culture. The old Irish manuscripts read aloud, by the light of the candle, and the old stories which were transmitted orally from father to son, were true legacies of comfort. There are still to-day in Ireland peasants who can neither read nor write, but who can recite straight off a hundred verses in Gaelic.[3] Such and such an illiterate old man can declaim for hours old epic songs, and while he speaks he is shaken with a

2 From many observations that have been made, it appears that these Western peasants have a vocabulary varying from 3,000 to 6,000 words ; the vocabulary of an ordinary English peasant is not above 500 to 800 words. Intermediate Education Commission, *Evidence*, p. 482.

3 Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P., depicts the type in *To-day and To-morrow in Ireland*, p. 62, *et seq.* Dr. Hyde has heard peasants recite the poems of Donogh More O'Daly, Abbot of Boyle, who died sixty years before the birth of Chaucer. *Revival of Irish Literature*. p. 130.

religious thrill ; another, like Colum Wallis (Colm de Bhailis), who recently died in the Oughterard Workhouse, had spent his life in composing Irish poems which the Gaelic League has piously gathered together and published. In the Irish country-side, once upon a time, everyone was a poet, just as everyone was an artist in the Italian cities of the Renaissance. But England came, and for a half century she had done all she could to destroy the Irish language. Above all things practical, and not sentimental, she did not say to herself that man does not live by bread alone ; she did not see that by taking from the Celtic dreamer his mother-tongue, she was taking from him all that that language meant to him in the shape of faith, poetry and idealism, all that made the joy and the strength of his life, and that thus she was killing him, both morally and intellectually. Inevitably, the peasant's thoughts turned towards departure from Ireland. Emigration became a matter of custom. Sons and daughters knew that, at a given moment, their common lot would be to go and live another life under other skies. Many have gone, and life grows sadder still for those who remain. The Irish country-side is dying. What can the Irish revival do now in face of this moral misery, which is far deeper and more desperate than any physical misery ? If one could but give back to the Irish peasant his language he would find salvation, for that would be to give him back his soul, his faith, his vision of the other world, his power of rising above misery to an ideal world of memory and tradition and hope ; it would be to give back to him his love of the soil of his fathers and courage in the struggle for daily bread. Life would no longer be so sad a business as it now is in the Irish country-side. Thus it is hopeful to see the efforts that for some years have been made in this direction by the Gaelic League and by some enlightened men who are trying to reconstitute country life on a better basis and to restore to it some of its charm and aforetime gaiety. The pleasures of village life of the old times are returning ; there are

dances, country concerts, travelling musicians with harps and pipes, Sunday gatherings, local *Feiseanna*, evening *ceilidhe*. Here and there we find lecture rooms and amusement halls organised for the use of the peasants; and, what is still more interesting, carefully selected lending libraries. This last is an idea which we French might well copy in many of our country villages. . . . .

VI.

When we have considered, as we have, the field of action of what is called the Gaelic movement, it becomes a matter of conviction that this is no merely superficial and artificial agitation, but a profound movement which may hold within it the germs of national re-birth, a movement that is destined to free the Irish nation from intellectual dependence upon England, and give it back its own life, moral and mental, economic and social. We find, in one word, the promise of an Ireland worthy of the name, an Irish Ireland.[1]

A consideration of it must suggest and recall those other movements of national renaissance of which so many small nationalities of Europe have given demonstration during the course of the nineteenth century. The Czech language and literature were all but extinguished a hundred years ago, when one evening four or five scholars, the last depositories of the national treasure, met together in a certain house in Prague to consider means by which they might bring this treasure to life again. A writer has said that if the roof of the house had fallen in there would have been an end of their nationality.[2] They fought and they triumphed. To-day, following the

[1] In a more precise way, the work done by the Gaelic League in Ireland may be compared to the work done in Norway by the *Norske Samlag* (founded in 1868) with the help of the philologist, Ivar Aasen, and to that actually being done in Brittany by the *Breton Union*.

[2] George Moore, *A Plea for the Soul of the Irish Nation* (*Nineteenth Century*, February, 1901).

example of the Czechs, the southern Slavs and the Poles are fighting for the recognition of their civilisation. From the beginning of the century Wales, after Wesley's regeneration work, had readopted the Welsh tongue, and had created a new Welsh literature. Soon afterwards the Magyar language was saved from Pan-Germanism, and the Finnish from Swedish influence. The Flemish, with Hendrick Conscience, resumed their natural organ of expression without losing French, and the Norwegians, in spite of the Danes, reconstituted their language, as the latter had a century before revived theirs, which was being stifled by German.

Everywhere the revival of the language has thus preceded or accompanied a national renaissance. Late in the lists Ireland, in her turn, comes to fight. She is struggling to preserve with her national language her right to live, her right to have a soul. She is fighting for something else as well, and this is the preservation in the world of a group of ideas, and traditions, whose responsible depository she is. And it must be said that of all the small nationalities who, confronting the gross utilitarianism and corrupt materialism of the modern world, seem created to represent the claims of beauty, truth, and civilisation, there is not one that is more worthy of being preserved than Celtic Ireland, very old, and always young. In none of them do we find a more delicate, or more spiritual genius, a genius richer in imagination, piety, and idealism: the preservation and development of it in complete, conscious and fruitful expression is, more than any other, essential to the future of humanity.

If this culture should perish it would be a crime. And if one takes the point of view of England's own self-interest it would be a mistake. England has need of a populous Ireland, a rich Ireland, a loyal Ireland, whose hostility she need not fear. But she has, above all, need of an Ireland that shall be truly Irish and Celtic. It is not a paradox to say that Ireland will be so much the less anti-English as she is the less Anglicised, as she is

more Celtic and national. Nor is this all. There is a Celtic factor in the composition of the English mind which has manifested itself clearly in the case of some of her greatest men, and greatest poets. It is to England's interest that this Celtic influence should continue to counterbalance in her genius the German and Norman elements. It is Matthew Arnold and not we who say this, and the thesis may be found in his celebrated work on the *Study of Celtic Literature*..

When the Gaelic movement was born in Ireland the general impression was that this movement came too late into a world too old. The cause seemed lost in advance. Foreign examples proved nothing, so it was said. Nowhere else had the national language fallen so low as in Ireland; no other country had to fight alone such a battle against such an adversary. If Ireland had but had behind her such solid strength as the Slav world behind the Czechs and the Poles she might stand a chance of success! But what is Pan-Celticism compared to Pan-Slavism?[3] To-day, on the other hand, when observers note how the mind of the nation has awakened to enthusiasm; when the ardour with which the Irish people have received the new gospel, and the intelligence with which they have understood what was expected of them is known; when after fifteen years of work, obstacles have been surmounted and results attained, it begins to be said that the impossible sometimes comes true, and that success is not impossible. No doubt, Ireland as yet is but at the dawn of day. The battle has only begun, but it is already half won against the outside enemy, that is to say, against anti-Celtic prejudice. One would like

3 The Pan-Celtic movement is an interesting one whose object is to bring together and ally the five groups of Celtic populations, the Bretons of France, the Irish, the Welsh, the Highlanders, and the people of the Isle of Man. The movement is certainly of interest, but Ireland has only an academic and sentimental concern in it. Ireland knows well that she is unripe for the long thoughts and hopes of the Pan-Celticists and that she would waste her strength if she went too far afield.

(See on Pan-Celticism, article by M. de Goffic in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1st May, 1906).

to be assured of its success against the enemies within, that is to say, against the absorbing and harmful influence of politics, against *raimeis* or vain rhetoric, Ireland's darling sin, against inertia, her worst weakness. We may say, however, that the movement has started well. The most sceptical of our Irish friends who five years ago smiled at Gaelic hopes are now almost sure that Ireland in the next generation will be bi-lingual, at least for the greater part. For the present, in any case, no one will deny the positive result that the movement has produced in the social domain. From one end of the country to the other the Gaelic spirit is working as a powerful factor of peace and of union. The Gaelic revival has restored the national idea and raised it above and beyond party, and religious profession. Under the Gaelic banner there are neither Unionists nor Nationalists, everyone is Irish. Of the two Irelands, the Gaelic renaissance is making one.

This movement opens a new phase in the history of Ireland. Please God it may be a happier one than those which have preceded it! First Ireland tried to regain her independence by force of arms. The insurrection of 1798 was the last great characteristic act of this period, of which the rising of 1848 and the Fenian conspiracy were reverberations. Then, with O'Connell and Parnell, she sought to regain her liberty through Parliamentary action and constitutional agitation. Without giving up the Parliamentary battle, she is now fighting for psychological freedom, for the moral reconstruction of her nationality. She is persuaded that when the mind of the people is reformed, when national sentiment, with all that it comprises of national faith, force of character and ardour in action, is restored, she will more easily find the ways of liberty and of prosperity.

CHAPTER III.—ECONOMIC REFORM

THE movement in favour of Economic Reform is akin to, yet distinct from, that movement which goes under the name of the Gaelic Revival. The latter is founded on the idea of nationality; the former on the principle of self-help. The one aims at universal national regeneration, the other at material progress and the economic salvation of the country. This salvation, however, is to be sought through methods or agencies which are not by nature exclusively economic or material. Like the Gaelic movement, the economic movement tries to re-make the character of the individual, and to revive the industrial vigour of Ireland by renewing her manhood, and raising her to the level of the necessities imposed by modern life and world-wide competition.

I.—THE EVIL AND THE REMEDY.

What is the cause of Ireland's economic decadence? As I have already said, this decadence is not due to a lack of natural resources.[1] It is not caused by the

[1] With reference to this movement see *Report of the Recess Committee*, Dublin, 1896. (New Edition, 1907). Sir Horace Plunkett, *Ireland in the New Century*, London, 1904. *Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, Dublin, 1902 (published by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction). *Cp.* The Annual *Reports*, the Monthly *Journals*, and other publications of the same Department, besides the Annual *Reports* and the various publications of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. *Cp.* Stephen Gwynn, M.P., *To-day and To-morrow in Ireland*, Dublin, 1903. See also the evidence of Sir Horace Plunkett and Mr. T. P. Gill before the University Commission. *Appendix* II., etc., and III., 231, etc. *Cp.* L. Paul-Dubois, *L'Exposition de Cork et le Nouveau Mouvement Economique en Irlande*, in the *Economiste Francais*, 6th December, 1902. See the last three chapters of E. Béchaux's book, *La Question Agraire en Irlande*, Paris. 1906.

absence of workers, for thousands of able-bodied men emigrate to America. Neither is it due to want of capital, for Ireland has plenty of capital lying idle in the Savings Bank and in other Banks.[2] The fact of the matter is that Ireland lacks confidence in herself and in her future, and that she needs initiative, business capacity and perseverance. Her people still believe in the old adage "Nothing Irish can succeed." Besides a good general education, all classes of Irishmen need technical instruction and a business training. Their ignorance in agricultural and technical matters is extreme, and their methods usually very antiquated; it is estimated that the produce of the land could be at least doubled.[3] The peasant and the workman need regular and intelligent employment, and discipline, honesty and accuracy in business matters. To mention one fact amongst thousands: the majority of strikes in Ireland are decided by appeal to the English Trades Unions, which naturally regard Irish industries as rivals to be destroyed.

If one omits certain necessary causes, such as political and agrarian agitation, and emigration to America, the true reason for this state of affairs is that social and commercial oppression in the past destroyed not only every trade and industry, but also the industrial and commercial instinct. "Even the traditions of commercial enterprise have perished through desuetude," said Lord Dufferin.[4] "Not only had the tree been stripped, but the roots had been destroyed," said Sir Horace Plunkett.[5]

Prolonged oppression, the evils of landlordism, and fiscal exploitation, did not permit the re-growth of these roots throughout the nineteenth century. Free Trade, too, and the development of transport facilities, have helped to transform Ireland from a prosperous nation into a country of beggars, or worse still, into a country

2 Ireland has more than £27,000,000 invested in English Funds.

3 *Report of the Recess Committee*, Dublin, 1896, p. 11.

4 *Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Irish Land*, London, 1867, p. 129.

5 *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 19.

offering a wide field for exploitation by Anglo-American syndicates.

This being so, what can be done to give Ireland her true position in the commercial world ? Should the State be applied to and asked to restore those industries and enterprises of which it was the destroyer ? Unfortunately though the omnipotence of the State can destroy such things, it cannot reconstruct them. Is there anything to be hoped for from a system of bounties or of protective tariffs ? Such artificial stimulants are always costly and rarely efficacious ; moreover, England would not countenance them. Would it be sufficient, supposing it possible, to persuade the Irish consumer to use only articles of Irish manufacture ? This preference for national industries, if given on any other condition but that of equality in price and quality, is praiseworthy, no doubt, but it is artificial and inefficient. In short, none of these remedies can have the effect desired. Since Irish decadence arises from the destruction of the commercial spirit, it is necessary to revive this spirit, and to educate the individual anew in commercial affairs. Above all the individual must be roused from his present state of inner depression ; he must be taught the conditions of labour ; he must be re-endowed with practical instincts and with faith in his own capacity and in the possibility of success. Such are the necessary preliminaries to all economic reform. This backward being must be transformed into an " economic man," and taught to be an active, intelligent and temperate worker, like the Danish peasant or the Dutch artisan. Helpless and ignorant individualist that he is, he must be restored to efficiency, on the one hand by self-help and co-operation, on the other by a good business or technical education. These are, broadly speaking, the lines on which the work should be carried out. The problem is before all else a problem of education ; the Irishman must receive that economic training which is his right, and which alone will fit him to take his place in the struggle for existence. It is not

so much a question of the direct and deliberate establishment of new industries ; the aim should rather be to create a condition of things and a condition of mind which will give full scope to individual initiative.

II.—Self help and Co-operation.[1]

Fifteen or twenty years ago these ideas attracted a small number of far-seeing Irishmen, " practical idealists," as they were afterwards well called. Amongst them should be mentioned Mr. R. Anderson, Father Finlay, Lord Monteagle, and the Hon. (now Sir) Horace Plunkett, a descendant of one of those old Norman families who have had their home in Ireland since the twelfth century. Ten years of ranching in the United States had convinced Horace Plunkett of a truth too often forgotten by Irishmen, namely, that politics is by no means the most edifying nor the most useful of all the spheres of human activity. On his return in 1888, he devoted himself to the social and economic regeneration of Ireland, more especially of rural Ireland, because agriculture is the most important Irish industry. His fellow-workers were men of various political views. His aim was to revive agriculture and regenerate the agriculturist by a programme of Self Help. But this aim could not be attained immediately by the mere diffusion of these opinions. The peasants must be brought and banded together if the lesson was to go home ; they had to be educated through the intermediary of social groups, the co-operative associations. Horace Plunkett and his fellow-workers decided to start a central society, with a view to organising and teaching the people. This body became known as the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society,

1 Amongst the promoters of economic reform were to be found representatives of all shades of political opinion, from ultra-Nationalists who admitted that economic reform was necessary, to Unionists like Sir H. Plunkett, who hoped to reconcile Ireland to the Union and to Imperialism by effecting the material regeneration of the country.

and little by little it has succeeded, though with some difficulty, in propagating the theory and practice of rural co-operation.

It is a curious thing that the promoters of this movement knew nothing at this time of the work accomplished on the Continent by rural co-operation. Force of circumstances had led them to the idea of co-operation, and in this way they learned to see, perhaps more clearly than the economists on the Continent, that the co-operative movement has an educational as well as a practical utility. In spreading their views throughout the country districts they naturally insisted most strongly on the practical value of these views. "Co-operation," said they to the peasants, "will help you to reduce your general expenses, to dispense with middlemen, to be your own bankers, and your own insurers. Isolated, you are powerless against competition; banded together, you will be, if not all-powerful, at least better armed for the struggle."

But the promoters themselves put most confidence in the educational value of co-operation. Co-operation, as they knew, raises the level of work by imposing a certain standard of workmanship and labour; it develops in the individual, by a process of mutual education, a practical comprehension of economic necessities, and a respect for competency; gives him training and discipline, teaches him the value of labour, and inculcates a feeling of responsibility. Co-operation, if well understood, is indeed the most powerful factor in an economic education. "All other education," writes a German economist, "applies to the individual only, but co-operation changes the *milieu*. And, for the most of human beings, *milieu* far more than race or tradition, decides success or failure in life."[2]

The inauguration of the movement was full of difficulties. Horace Plunkett, it is said, had to speak at

[2] M. T. Bonn, 4th *Report* of Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, p. 103

more than fifty meetings before he was able to form a single rural association. Everywhere he was met by a deep-seated ignorance of the co-operative principle, and by the peasant's apathy and hatred of innovations. Political strife, on the other hand, impeded all progress ; Nationalist butter was set up against Unionist butter, Protestant against Catholic milk ; and more than one agricultural syndicate came to grief during the quarrel between Parnellites and anti-Parnellites. Finally there was the enmity of the retail dealers, and of the English Co-operators,[3] who had profited by the apathy of the Irish peasant, and exploited the dairy industry of Ireland to their own profit.

At the same time, the audacious innovators were overwhelmed with objections. It was said that their ideals were Utopian ; that rural co-operation, having failed in England, could not succeed in Ireland ; that the Irish were capable of conspiring, but not of combining, and that they would only exert themselves under the impulse of political and social passions. Definitely non-political, the movement was unanimously attacked by every political party. The Tories blamed Horace Plunkett, Unionist and Protestant as he was, for trafficking with the rebels, and at the General Election of 1900 they turned him out of his seat in the House of Commons. The Nationalists accused him of trying to kill Home Rule by kindness, and to compromise Irish aspirations ; they were suspicious of so much benevolence and liberalism : *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.* Finally, intelligent people said : " Your ideas are good, but nothing can be done whilst landlordism continues to exist. You are putting the cart before the horse. You cannot make omelettes without eggs. To improve agriculture you must first give the peasant some land to cultivate ; at present the rent paid to the landlord exhausts the value

3 That is, of the English Co-operative Wholesale Society. On the other hand, Sir Horace and his friends were most kindly assisted by the heads of the English Co-operative Union. (*Ireland in the New Century*, p. 184).

of the land." To which the promoters of the new scheme answered: "Why delay? The danger no longer arises from landlordism, but from the ignorance, the inertia, and the isolation of the peasant. The rent represents only a small part of the cost of cultivation. If the grazing lands were to-morrow, by a miracle, to be divided amongst the peasants, these latter would be unable to cultivate them, owing to a want of technical instruction and of capital. If 'rent' were abolished to-morrow, the peasant, isolated as he is, would be unable to struggle against competition. Further, a peasant proprietary would be impossible without co-operation amongst the peasants. The very existence of the Irish countryside is menaced; there is not an instant to lose if we wish to save it by saving the Irish peasant."

An intelligent propaganda on the part of Sir Horace and the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society,[4] soon began to gain support for the new ideas, in spite of all obstacles and objections. The Society is of an original and novel type, and has for its aim to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural population of Ireland by instruction in the principles and methods of co-operation. Of itself it has created nothing; it merely organises, advises, and controls. It sends out organizers, who undertake campaigns in one district after another, and endeavour to establish co-operative associations by explaining their aims, advantages and methods to the peasants. The parent Society watches over its offshoots, initiates them into the best methods of procedure, superintends their operations, and audits their accounts. Through its agents and instructors it trains the co-operators in good business habits, and teaches how to

4 This Society, founded in 1893, and having its headquarters in Dublin (Lincoln place), has, in ten years, spent more than £50,000 in organising the Co-operative Movement in Ireland. The office of President has been filled successively by Sir Horace Plunkett, Lord Monteagle, and Col. Everard. Its funds are drawn from subscriptions and donations. The affiliated societies pay an annual levy; and the Society also receives financial support from the Department of Agriculture. Many Co-operative Societies do not join the I.A.O.S.

keep accounts and to apply co-operative rules. In a word, it undertakes their economic education. In 1894, when the Society commenced its labours, there were 33 Co-operative Associations in Ireland; at present (1904) there are 778 of various kinds, with 85,000 members, representing a population of over 400,000 persons, or about one-seventh of the total population of Ireland.

It is well known that both in Germany and in Italy co-operation originated with the formation of country banks. In Ireland and France, on the contrary, the first associations of the kind were either agricultural societies or co-operative dairies. At the present day this last form of co-operation is the most usual in Ireland, where there are 328 dairies worked on this system. Next in number come the country banks, of which there are 200, with 11,194 members. These banks are mostly of the Raiffeisen type. There are besides 131 Agricultural Societies (whose business it is to attend to the breeding of cattle, the making of joint purchases, and the like); 54 co-operative associations of rural industries, principally lace; and 62 other societies for the sale of eggs and fowl, the dressing of flax, and general agriculture.[5] Finally, there are three Federations of Societies—the Bee-keepers, the Irish Co-operative Agency Society, engaged in the sale of butter produced by the Irish co-operative dairies, and the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society, which looks after the wholesale business for the country associations, and finds a market for their goods. These last two societies had in 1904 a turn-over of £169,273 and £58,843 respectively.

All this, doubtless, is but a beginning. Many classes of the rural population have still to be won over to co-operation, and many varieties of co-operation have yet to be developed, including the system of mutual or joint

5 Some efforts have been made to form Co-operative Societies for the common tenure and cultivation of land. This form of co-operation, of which there are some successful examples in England, and which, moreover, prevents division of land into small portions, has only succeeded in Ireland when applied to grazing farms.

insurance, the collective usage of machinery, co-operative bacon-curing factories, and the like. The Societies, too, have often to be blamed for bad management, favouritism or carelessness. Sometimes a Committee will hold its meetings in a public-house; when the auditor of the I.A.O.S. pays a surprise visit he finds that the accounts are behîndhand, or that, perhaps, none have been kept. On the whole, however, it is impossible not to be surprised at the progress that the movement has made. Over the Irish peasant, who is at the same time adaptable and backward, it has certainly exercised an extraordinary influence. "There is much in the genius and tradition of the Irish farmer," says Sir Horace Plunkett, "which fits him for combination. The old clan spirit is by no means dead in him. Isolated, the Irish farmer is conservative, sceptical of innovation, a believer in routine and tradition; in union with his fellows, he is progressive, open to ideas, and wonderfully keen at grasping the essential features of the new proposal for his advancement." [6]

Once Co-operation is learned and understood in Ireland, there is no danger of its deviating, as has been the case in England, into that form of distributive co-operation which is simply capitalism of a new order. The movement continues to receive support, not only from the central organising Society, wlich is now subsidised for this purpose by the Department of Agriculture, but from the Department itself, and from agricultural committees and County Councils. An effort is being made to develop flax-growing and market gardening, to improve the breeds of cattle, and to bring methods of cultivation and farming to perfection.

The yield of butter per gallon of milk has constantly increased during the last ten years, [7] and Irish butter is

[6] Extract from a speech made in 1902. (*Ireland, Industrial and Agricultural*, p. 231). Moreover it is amongst a people of a very different race and of a very different character—the Germans—that Co-operation has hitherto found its strongest supporters.

[7] The average in 1904 was 6·59 oz. per gallon of milk. This figure is higher than that of the French Co-operative dairies.

now able to hold its ground in the English market against its great rival, Danish butter. With the assistance of the Gaelic League, a strenuous effort is being made to lessen the melancholy of country life by improving the condition of the cottages, and by establishing libraries, classes, and lectures. The most hopeful sign of success is that in certain districts, notably Tyrone, Monaghan, and Fermanagh, emigration appears almost to have ceased. "If this continues," said Father Finlay, with somewhat exaggerated optimism, "all abnormal emigration from Ireland will have disappeared in ten years."

Morally, too, the bracing effect of the movement has begun to make itself felt. Discipline, if properly exercised, strengthens instead of destroying individual energy; and in the same way this important lesson called Co-operation, directed and controlled as it is, gives men experience, stimulates individual effort, and developes a taste for work by increasing the produce of labour. There is no better education than this. It is interesting to notice that it is the people of the West, apparently the most miserable and the most unprogressive, who are yet the most attracted by the new theories. The co-operative credit system, the most difficult of all forms of co-operation, is the form that succeeds best amongst them. It should be mentioned that nowhere in Ireland is the want of credit felt as it is in the West, amongst those wretched peasants who are ignored by the large banks, and to whom the village tradesmen and the gombeen men will only lend at an interest of 20 or 30 per cent. The Raiffeisen Bank, thanks to the unlimited liability of its members,[8] can work a miracle whereby a number of persons, all separately insolvent, are rendered solvent by combination and by their individual honesty. Sometimes

8 The Raiffeisen Bank, owing to the unlimited liability of its members, is peculiarly suited to the people of the West, who live under comparatively uniform economic and financial conditions. In the East and South, where there are large and small farmers, unlimited liability is not the rule.

these banks have a small capital arising from shares or deposits, but more usually they borrow money for circulation at 4 or 5 per cent. The Congested Districts Board and the Department of Agriculture advance money to them at lower rates. They advance loans for a period of three months to their members, at a yearly rate of 5 or 6 per cent. There are no bad debts, even amongst those agricultural labourers who have themselves entered on the registers as "beggars." Money is lent only for reproductive work, after this work has been approved of by the officials of the Society. The peasants are said to realise profits of from 25 to 150 per cent. on these loans. These profits are principally made by the rearing of cattle. It is considered an honour amongst them to be chosen as manager of a bank. Usury and the usurer are disappearing.[9] But however great the material advantages of the co-operative credit system may be, the educational results are still more important. As an instrument of education and of economic progress there is nothing to equal these Co-operative Credit Associations. They give the people a good business training, whilst the system of unlimited liability on which they are worked enforces prudence, accuracy, and foresight, and effects a natural separation of the working bees from the drones.[10] It is these qualities which have converted the credit system from a ruinous temptation into the most efficacious of stimulants. Formerly the debtors of the village used to hide themselves; now it is considered a matter of pride to have borrowed from the bank. An interest in the bank, as one of the secretaries has pointed out, often makes the creditor more sober, more active, and more economical. Thus the roots of drunkenness and dissipation are cut.[11] A priest at

9 *Ireland Industrial and Agricultural*, p. 131, etc. *Cf.* the Annual *Reports* of the I.A.O.S. A need is now expressed for a central bank for the rural banks, analogous to the *Caisse Centrale*, which was founded at Darmstadt in Germany, in 1899. The State would have to advance money at low rates of interest to this bank.

10 Plunkett, *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 19.

1 Sixth *Report* of the I.A.O.S., p. 13.

Belmullet states that the Raiffeisen Bank "has raised the moral tone of the parish, it has made the people more industrious, more anxious to keep their promises, and generally more honest." [12] In this way the moral force of co-operation is realised, and from the practice of the collective virtue "Help one another" will spring the individual virtue, "Help thyself." Herein lies the justification of the first principle of the pioneers of economic regeneration in Ireland—"Self-help by mutual help."

III.—Technical Instruction.

These men preached yet another lesson to Ireland. They maintained that State aid was essential for the purpose of giving technical or business instruction to every class of producers, whether agricultural, commercial, or industrial. It is such instruction alone that can enable these producers to ply their trades profitably and to meet foreign competition on equal terms. Individual initiative and independent associations can do much; there are many things which they alone can do, but they cannot do everything. Neither is the State all-powerful, but amongst those things which it alone can give is to be numbered a technical and business education. Everywhere abroad large sums have been granted for such instruction; in Ireland anything that was done only tended until recently to turn young people away from industrial careers, and to produce officials, lawyers, or doctors. So long as the Irish lacked the spirit of combination and the spirit of initiative the basis of progress was absent, and therefore State aid would have been useless. Now, however, Ireland, owing to the results gained from the system of self-help, has shown herself worthy of being aided in her efforts for reform, and has a right to State intervention. Who, indeed,

[12] Rev. J. O'Donovan, *New Ireland Review*, April, 1899 p. 74.

could contest this right? Ireland has suffered through the Penal Laws, through commercial legislation, even through Free Trade; she has surely a right to compensation. The State destroyed Ireland's economic spirit in the past; the State should therefore endeavour as far as possible to revive it.

But in Ireland the "State" means the United Kingdom, or the Parliament at Westminster. For a long time no notice was taken of Ireland's demands for State aid for her industries and agriculture. In the summer of 1895 Sir Horace Plunkett started a Committee of Inquiry to examine the question from a practical point of view. This committee was composed of practical, industrial and commercial Irishmen of different political opinions. At its sessions Father Finlay, a Jesuit, met Dr. Kane, Grand Master of the Belfast Orangemen, whilst Mr. John Redmond, the leader of the Parnellite Party, sat next Unionists like The O'Conor Don and Lord Mayo. For political reasons the anti-Parnellites refused to attend. The Recess Committee, as it was called, occupied itself with inquiries into the methods of procedure adopted abroad, especially in Germany, Denmark, Belgium and France. With regard to the last-mentioned country, they obtained sound advice from M. Tisserand, then Director-General of Agriculture. The report of the Recess Committee,[1] a most remarkable piece of work, formed the basis of a Bill which became law in 1899,[2] during the Chief Secretaryship of Mr. Gerald Balfour. This Act established a Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland.[3]

[1] *Report of the Recess Committee*, Dublin, 1896. A new edition, with notes and preface by Mr. T. P. Gill, has just been published (Dublin, 1907). The reports on the enquiries made abroad are to be found in appendices to the Report. The Report itself has been entirely revised by Mr. Gill.

[2] Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act (62 and 63 Vic., c. 50).

[3] The new Department had a precursor in Ireland in the shape of the Royal Dublin Society, established in 1731, with the object of developing agriculture, manufactures and other useful arts and sciences. During many years this Society received considerable grants from the

The new Department is managed by a Vice-President,[4] and by a General Secretary, Mr. T. P. Gill, who is undoubtedly "the right man in the right place."[5] The Chief Secretary for Ireland exercises a somewhat nominal authority over the department, and is responsible to Parliament for its actions. The Department disposes of an annual sum of £166,000, drawn almost exclusively from Irish sources.[6] The heads of the Department are assisted firstly by a Consultative Council, or Council of Agriculture, two-thirds of the members of which are elected by the County Councils, and one-third nominated by the Department, and secondly by two committees of control, the Agricultural Board and the Board of

State, for the purpose of subsidising industries and agriculture. At the present day the Society is chiefly occupied in developing the science of agriculture, and it organises the celebrated Dublin Horse Show. It is, however, an independent Society, of an academic character, and its influence, though good, is very limited.

4 According to law, the Vice-President, like the English Ministers, should be a Member of Parliament and responsible to Parliament. Sir H. Plunkett, though he lost his seat at the General Election of 1900, was, nevertheless, retained as head of the "Department" by the Conservative Government, in order that he might put the new work on a sound basis; he has even been provisionally retained by the new Liberal Government.

5 Mr. T. P. Gill, who was formerly a Nationalist Member of Parliament, has done much to ensure the success of the new Department. He is a very able man, and his Nationalist opinions give him a considerable influence amongst the people. As member and Honorary Secretary of the Recess Committee he had already taken an important part in the work of this Committee. He elaborated its conclusions and recommendations, and helped to prepare the Bill which created the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

6 Of this, the sum of £78,000 is taken from the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account (this sum was formerly paid to the Commissioners of National Education), and £70,000 from the Irish Church Fund. An Act passed in 1902 added £5,000 to this annual grant. An annual sum of £55,000 is devoted to Technical Instruction, a sum of £15,000 to the Irish College of Veterinary Surgeons, and a sum of £10,000 to Sea Fisheries. Moreover, when the Department was first established it received a capital sum of £200,000. A good proportion of this sum, with the savings of the first few years, has been put in reserve for possible extra expenditure. I have already remarked that the old Equivalent Grant, voted in 1889 for purposes of technical instruction, has not been handed over to Ireland for the past few years by the Treasury. On the other hand, a sum of £7,000 was granted in 1905 for the same purpose, but this is no compensation, because the money is taken from the *Ireland Development Grant*, which belongs by right to Ireland. (See the Department's *Reports*, 1901-1902, p. 6; 1903-1904, p. 18; 1904-1905, p. 10).

Technical Instruction. These two committees (two-thirds of the members of which are elected) supervise the operations and expenditure of the Department. As Mr. Gerald Balfour has said, they are in financial matters in the same position with regard to the Department as Parliament[7] is with regard to the Government. This introduction of the principle of autonomy and the principle of representation into the management of Irish affairs is of quite recent date. It is a hopeful sign for the future, and stands in natural connection with the foundation of Local Government on the elective principle by the Act of 1898.

The new Department exists in order to aid, improve and develop agriculture and industries.[8] But how does it propose to attain this end ? Will it content itself with distributing subsidies and other such aid ? Or will it finally set up as a manufacturer or trader under pretence of encouraging industry and commerce ? Nothing is further from the minds of those who guide its policy than the wish to discourage individual initiative, or to relieve the people from all economic difficulties. Rather do they

7 The Council of Agriculture must meet at least once a year ; it discusses questions of public interest with regard to the Act of 1899, and as a matter of fact its sphere of action is somewhat narrow ; but it has the advantage of bringing the Department into contact with the representatives of public opinion. The Agricultural Board consists of eight members chosen by the Council of Agriculture, and four members nominated by the Department. The composition of the Board of Technical Education is analogous, but rather more complicated (Art. 10). A joint Committee serves as a bond of union between the Department and the Boards of Education (Art. 23). Besides its agricultural and industrial functions (which are not defined, and, therefore, not limited by law) the Department has undertaken many duties formerly divided amongst different authorities, such as the control of veterinary and sanitary matters, the publication of agricultural and industrial statistics, the administration of annual grants for instruction in " Science and Arts," the control of sea and river fishing, of railways and canals, and of various institutions such as the Royal College of Science, the Science and Art Museum, the National Library (Dublin), the Metropolitan School of Art, the Albert Agricultural College (Dublin), and the Munster Institute (Cork). This system of administration is more or less provisional ; sooner or later all these independent Boards must be re-organised and formed into fewer but larger Departments.

8 *First Report*, 1900-1901, p. 1.

wish to encourage them to overcome these difficulties, and to teach them to use their own initiative aright. The method employed is that of helping the individual to help himself. They want to give a technical education to all those who are taking part in the economic life of the country, and at the same time to give good general information to those engaged in agriculture, industry, or commerce, information which only a central authority can be in a position to give. Thus they hope to make each man the instrument of his own salvation, to remove all obstacles to industrial reform, and to lay the foundations of economic regeneration in Ireland.

This work of spreading information, of controlling and of superintending, belongs to such Departments in all countries, but in Ireland the special object of the Department has been to establish a system of technical instruction adapted to the needs of the country, and to those workers engaged in agriculture, commerce, and other industries It is unnecessary to enter into much detail, in the first place because the system is only in its infancy, and in the second because it has been modelled on analogous systems on the Continent, and especially in France, with this difference, that Ireland is profiting by the experience of her neighbours, and will thus avoid many mistakes. Amongst the institutions which the Irish Department has already established or reorganised may, however, be mentioned the appointment of itinerant instructors, the opening of science classes in secondary schools, of technical schools, and of evening classes, all with a system of scholarships which will enable young students to obtain a superior technical education at the College of Science in Dublin.[9] The Irish system has, however, one original feature, namely, the co-operation of the central authority, the Department, with local authorities, Town and County Councils, and especially agricultural or technical committees appointed by these Councils, in the management of financial and other

9 See the details in the Department's Annual *Reports*.

matters. The Department initiates all undertakings, and all projected schemes, but nothing is done in any locality without the collaboration of the local authorities, and on the condition that these latter pay half the expenses. Of course there are certain central services and institutions which do not fall within this rule. The principle of a central authority is thus assured, whilst at the same time local interest is aroused, and a spirit of enterprise and responsibility stimulated. In fact, after some inevitable quarrels, the majority of the towns and County Councils have come into line with the Department. Indeed, of all the administrative bodies in Ireland, the Department of Agriculture is the only one in which the people have any measure of confidence, although of course they have never renounced their privilege of criticising it.[10] The work to be done presented, moreover, some exceptional difficulties. To begin with there was an absence of teachers qualified to make use of the new methods of instruction; the masters and the pupils had all to be trained.[11] Furthermore, if the Irish system of agriculture, antiquated as it was, required to be improved and amended, in the matter of industries, nothing at all or practically nothing had yet been done. How create a system of industrial education for non-existent industries? "You are encouraging emigration," cried some critics. "There is no employment to be had in Ireland, and the workers whom you train will be forced to seek a living elsewhere." This may be true, but everything must have a beginning. It is useless to deny the fact that one of the principal causes of Irish stagnation lies in the incompetency of the workman, and therefore it is necessary to educate the workman in order to inaugurate an industrial revival.

[10] Every Town or County Council has a Committee (elected) of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. The Department's *Reports* bear constant testimony to the zeal and ability of the local authorities.

[11] I say nothing about the difficulty of winning over the ignorant and suspicious peasant; that difficulty exists in every country.

Other reproaches are also levelled at the new Department. It is accused of belittling Irish ability, and seeking its most important officials outside Ireland. It is abused for working too slowly; people say that it is too fond of talk and rhetoric, and can show very little useful work or effective results. The more advanced critics say that the Department only plays with the problem, and that it is merely a screen to conceal English jealousy of all Irish competition.

It is, however, impossible not to recognise that the movement inaugurated by the Department, and generally favoured by the Catholic clergy and by local bodies, has had a remarkable and beneficial influence on the majority of the population. Trained not only by co-operation, but also by experience on local elective bodies, the peasant is quickly grasping the advantages of a better agricultural education and of competent advice on agricultural matters. The workingmen of the towns, too, have responded with enthusiasm to the offer of technical instruction. This is to a great extent owing to the influence of the Christian Brothers, who were the pioneers of the new movement, which they afterwards helped to spread. At Clonmel, in the autumn of 1902, I happened to be present at the opening of a technical school, established by the Christian Brothers with the help of the Department. It would be difficult to exaggerate the interest which the inhabitants took in the new work, or the ardour, energy, and hope shown by young people hitherto weighed down under the yoke of national despondency.[1][2]

Now as to the first fruits of the movement. For the last ten years there have been symptoms, however slight, of an industrial revival, particularly in the South of Ireland. Herein lies some hope for the economic future of the country. A few years ago a factory for bicycles

[2] A Commission to enquire into the working of the Department was appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, March 31st, 1906. It published a *Majority* and a *Minority Report*, the latter, a remarkable document, being due to Mr. W. L. Micks.

and agricultural machines was founded in Wexford. A shipbuilding yard was opened in Dublin in 1902. Paper and bacon factories, and woollen manufactures, have been established here and there; in 1882 there were 12 woollen mills in Ireland; to-day there are more than 100. At Sligo, Newry, Lucan and elsewhere, power is obtained very cheaply by means of large turbines. There are factories worked by electricity in Galway and other centres. In the West efforts have been made to develop the use of electricity and "white coal" or water power, and also to utilise the immense supply of peat which should be in future one of Ireland's most valuable assets. It is also hoped to revive such artistic industries as the manufacture of enamel, pottery, glass, and metal repoussé work. It seems as if commercial initiative and an industrial spirit were about to reappear. In every large town the traders and manufacturers have established industrial associations in order to increase the sale of Irish goods, to seek a reduction in transport rates, to obtain useful information as to markets, and finally to organise Exhibitions. We may cite yet another sign of the times. Articles of Irish manufacture, formerly rejected and despised, are now counterfeited by British manufacturers. Twenty years ago Irish tweeds could only be sold as Cheviot; now Cheviot tweeds are sold as Irish!

IV.

I have endeavoured to explain the scope and the importance of these initial efforts towards economic regeneration. As will be seen, the object of the movement is not to make Ireland a country either of great industries, or of *grande culture*. In the nature of things small agricultural holdings and large grazing farms must remain the rule in Ireland. But if the peasant proprietors are to hold their ground they must be organised and educated.

Large manufacturing centres, with their "congestion" of workers, such as one sees at Birmingham and Manchester, will always be the exception in Ireland, and they are neither desirable or desired. But side by side with agriculture there is room in Ireland for the majority of those industries connected with agriculture. There is room also for all those minor industries necessary to the existence of the people, not to mention arts and crafts. With a little education the Irish Celt should be able to regain his traditional taste and skill in these latter branches of industry. During the nineteenth century Denmark and Wurtemburg have brought the science of agriculture to the highest pitch of perfection. At the same time, without establishing any large manufactures, they have succeeded in creating a prosperous and healthy industrial life. The problem in Ireland is analogous in kind, and the Irish can succeed in solving it—if they wish to do so.

Outside its economic application, the new movement is of social importance to Ireland. I have spoken of the educative influence of co-operation, and of local self-government. Up to a certain point there is an analogy between these influences and the influence of technical or professional education. Every fresh acquisition of skill, every piece of experience turned over in thought increases the power of the individual; and all training and discipline are, of their nature, phenomena of progress. But the work must go further. Economic education is but one side, the beginning of social education. When a German savant was once asked what in his opinion had hitherto prevented the regeneration of Ireland, he replied that it was the attempt to impose individualism on the country without first educing and educating the individual.

The promoters of the new economic movement have undertaken to educe and educate the individual in a special sense, and by certain special methods. At the same time they teach men who are divided by politics

or religion to unite together for the common good. The economic movement should not exclude other movements. They are all necessary for the country's good, and must be developed if Ireland is to be saved and is to take her place amongst the nations. For as that great Irishman, Thomas Davis, has said: "You cannot have a nation without the elements of a nation, and one of the first elements of a nation is an educated democracy."

CHAPTER IV.—THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION

In the foregoing chapters I have endeavoured to throw some light on the drift and possibilities of the Irish Revival. But by whose agency is this Revival to be achieved? Not by that of the Government, which is, of its very essence, anti-national. The landlords, who are indifferent or hostile, are also out of the question, whilst the middle classes are debarred from leadership by paucity of numbers. What of the Catholic clergy, who have been, for two hundred years, the sole mainstay of an exceedingly religious people? On the other hand, however, are there not certain elements in the religious situation which may prove obstacles in the path of the national movement? Ireland is distracted by denominational struggles, sectarian fanaticism, and the first phases of anti-clericalism. Nowhere is the religious question more a part of social life, and nowhere are differences of creed more connected with political differences. In the study of the religious question, therefore, we should find some hints as to the future of Ireland.[1]

I.—The Churches in Ireland.

Owing to emigration and immigration the number of Catholics in Ireland during the last two and a half centuries has varied between 75 per cent. and 80 per cent.

1 On the religious question, see Cardinal Perraud, *Etudes sur l'Irlande Contemporaire*, II. *passim*.

Life, Times, and Correspondence of Dr. Doyle, by W. J. Fitzpatrick, Dublin, 1880. *Letters of John MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam*, Dublin, 1893. *Life of John MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam*, by O'Reilly, New York, 1890. *Life of Archbishop Murray*, by Meagher, Dublin, 1853.

of the total population. In 1901, taking the last *Census*,[2] the Catholics numbered 3,308,661, or 74.21 per cent. of the population; the Episcopalians 581,089, or 13.03 per cent.; and the Presbyterians 443,276, or 9.94 per cent. There were besides 125,749 individuals of different other persuasions. These last may be eliminated, and so may the Presbyterians, who are descendants of the Scotch colonists brought over by James II., and are collected together in the North-East corner of Ulster. The Presbyterian Church has always been independent of the State, and, except for the *Regium Donum*, it has never enjoyed any privilege or subsidy. Were it not for the persecutions they endured in the eighteenth century, one might say that the Presbyterians resemble those fortunate people who have no history.

There remain the Episcopalians and the Catholics. The Episcopalians, or members of the Anglican Communion, represent the party of the English Ascendancy in Ireland. They belong to a class which is rich, or at least comfortable; are usually landed proprietors, officials, professional men, or members of the lower middle classes; and although in part concentrated in Ulster, are also to be found in the other provinces isolated and, as it were, lost in the midst of a non-Protestant population.

The Catholics constitute the great bulk of those who can properly be called the Irish people, the "natives." England has despoiled them of their churches, their lands, and their government. Socially they are divided from the Episcopalians by a horizontal line of demarcation. Above this line are the privileged classes, the friends of

Writings of Cardinal Cullen, by Cardinal Moran, Dublin, 1882. Sir C. G. Duffy, *Young Ireland* and *Four Years of Irish History*. *Maynooth College, its Centenary History*, by Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Dublin, 1895. *Annual Record of the Maynooth Union*. *Cf.* the *Evidence* annexed to the Report of the Royal Commission on University Education (1902). *Cf.* Fr. Sheehan's novels on Irish clerical life. *Cf.* with reference to modern anti-Catholic controversy, Filson Young, *Ireland at the Cross Roads*, London, 1904.

[2] *General Report*, P. I., etc., p. 50. *Cf.* De Beaumont, *op. cit.* II. 390, and Cardinal Perraud, II., *op. cit.* 466.

the "Castle"; below it the mass of the people, Catholic and poor. In England, on the other hand, the line of demarcation is vertical; and Catholicism numbers amongst its adherents a duke, several peers, persons of the middle classes, and workingmen—representatives, in a word, of all classes of society.

In Ireland the unequal struggle between Protestants and Catholics has lasted for more than three centuries. It has been exhausting and disastrous, and is deplored by all true patriots who desire a "united Ireland," such as, a hundred years ago, existed just long enough to show that it was capable of existence. On the one side are numbers, poverty, and the signs and fruits of slavery; on the other wealth, honours and power, the rusted sword and yellowed parchments of persecution. It is not the Catholic majority that takes the initiative in persecution. Haunted by the memory of the Penal Laws, they are but gradually freeing themselves from the idea that the Protestant is the master of Ireland and that they are his slaves, that he is a free man and they are helots. They are rather anti-English than anti-Protestant; if they attack the members of the Ascendancy party or the English Colony, it is rather on account of their tyranny and their privileges than on account of their religion. No one is more popular than a Protestant who is also a Nationalist; in fact, there have always been Protestants amongst the Nationalist Members of Parliament, and evil-minded people even say that Catholic electors like to vote for a Protestant if he is a Nationalist. They are sure that he will not betray them, for he has burned his boats.[3]

3 Speaking at Chester in 1886, Lord Spencer, a former Lord Lieutenant, said, "I have known instances not a few while I was in Ireland of bigotry and intolerance . . . but I am bound to say the bigotry and intolerance was on the side, not of the Catholic majority, but of the Protestant minority." Another Protestant, Sir Horace Plunkett, writes: "My own experience distinctly proves that it is no disadvantage to a man to be a Protestant in Irish political life, and that where opposition is shown to him by Roman Catholics, it is almost invariably on political, social, or agrarian, but not on religious grounds." (*Ireland in the New Century*, p. 106). There are many examples in

The anti-Catholicism of Irish Protestants, on the other hand, equals and sometimes surpasses their anti-Nationalism. In this they differ from the English Protestants, whose liberal and tolerant spirit is continually offended by their demeanour. To the Irish Protestant the Catholic religion is not only the "Error of Rome," it is also the religion of the conquered, and as such only to be despised. They hate it too because it is the one possession of Ireland which they have not been able to confiscate; it has survived massacres, Penal Laws, proselytism, and now lives to witness the defeat of the Protestants themselves. There are indeed a few Irish Protestants who are courageous enough to be liberal; would that there were more! There is nothing in the world to compare with the civil war waged by anti-Catholic fanatics in Ulster. In Belfast and Portadown, for instance, there are continual disturbances and demonstrations against the Catholics. The "Papists" are attacked with cries of "Croppies lie down," and "To Hell with the Pope"; "Papist" workmen are excluded from the factories; the "Papist Bishop" is flouted by the popular orators,—and this in Belfast, in which the Protestants are three to one. Throughout the rest of Ireland the Protestants, whilst preaching tolerance, display that zeal for religion of which Burke said that it never shows "any wonderful heat but when it afflicts or mortifies our neighbour." They clamour for persecution, they attack Papistry in the newspapers, at public meetings, and in the pulpit. They circulate anti-Catholic literature, and support street-preachers, and so-called "Medical Missions" which busy themselves more with "conversions" than with cures. Further, they exclude Catholics from public offices, from juries, and from the best positions

history of the tolerance of Catholic Ireland; amongst other instances we have the honours accorded to the Protestant Archbishop Bedell, and the Act for the establishment of liberty of conscience passed by the Parliament of 1689, at the height of the Catholic reaction under James II. (*Cf.* Lecky, *England in the 18th Century*, II., 389).

in trade and commerce.[4] The motto *No Papist need apply* is still too true in Ireland. The "Papists," however, are at last beginning to grow restive under the spur, and to assert their rightful position in the country. There is, indeed, a small minority of Catholics who cling on to the skirts of the Ascendancy party, those "Castle Catholics" of whom Daniel O'Connell used to say "The Lord forgive me for having emancipated such fellows as those." The majority, however, are plucking up courage, and intend making a reality of that "Catholic Emancipation" of 1829, which, socially speaking, is as yet only a shadow. The recent Local Government Act (1898) has given the Catholics, by the natural operation of the popular vote, the patronage of all those posts which were hitherto monopolised by Protestants. Moreover, there is an agitation on foot to further the claims of the Catholics to a just proportion of situations in railways, banks, and the Post Offices. Consequently there is also a revival of Protestant anti-Catholicism. Diatribes are launched by the Anglican Bishops against Rome; there are indignant protestations against the establishment of a Catholic University; and a wild clamour is raised, when, on the death of Queen Victoria, the more tolerant Protestants advocate the suppression in the Coronation Oath of the celebrated declaration against Catholic "idolatry." We have, in brief, all the complaints that might naturally be expected from an Oligarchy which sees its privileges and its superiority attacked by the "idolators," and is exasperated at the final defeat of the efforts which for three centuries it has put forth to "decatholicise" Ireland.

From the Reformation to the present day, Protestant England has done its best to make the sister island Protestant also. Everyone knows that the conversion of

4 The daughter of an Anglican clergyman records that she used, as a child, when she went out walking on Sundays, to distribute proselytising pamphlets, which she had been made to copy out during the previous week.

Ireland to Christianity was followed in that country by a magnificent flowering forth of religious enthusiasm, and by a golden age in art and learning. Everyone knows too, that from the sixth to the eighth centuries the "Island of Saints and Scholars" sent missionaries all over Europe, and that students flocked from all parts of the world to her schools at Armagh, Lismore, and Clonmacnoise. After the Norse invasion this Celtic Church of Ireland was restored by Saint Malachy, but when the Anglo-Normans invaded Ireland in the twelfth century, it found itself supplanted within the Pale by a rival church with an English priesthood. In the sixteenth century the Reformation was accepted by this English Church within the Pale, but it was rejected by the Celtic Church, and by the whole of Celtic Ireland Under Henry VIII. and "Good Queen Bess," the era of persecution and confiscation began. Finding herself unable to "reform" Irish Catholicism, Elizabeth proscribed it, and as she could not make Protestants of the Irish, she "planted" Ireland with colonies of English Protestants. She formally "established" the Anglican Church of Ireland, and endowed it with churches, monasteries, and vast grants of land. She massacred and banished the Papists, and, as Cardinal Perraud says, made "few apostates, but many martyrs." After the Rebellion of 1641, Cromwell resumed and completed her work. *Hibernia pacata*: Ireland was at length pacified, but she remained Catholic.

In the eighteenth century, persecution, hitherto a matter of force, became legalised by the celebrated Penal Laws, that code of oppression and corruption which declared the Catholics to be outlaws. But Irish Catholicism survived the Penal Laws as it had survived persecution and bloodshed, and as it will survive the proselytising campaign of the present day, whether it be official or officious, conducted through the school and the workhouse, or through the societies of public and private charity which seek to kill "superstition" by kindness.

At the close of the eighteenth century Ireland began for the first time since the Reformation to enjoy a little peace, and from that time onward we have to chronicle regeneration and expansion. But we must first follow out the history of the Established Church, or, as it is called in the Statutes, the Church of Ireland.

II.—The Church of Ireland and the Disestablishment.

At the close of the eighteenth century, and during a great part of the nineteenth, the Anglican Church was still supreme in Ireland. She was the Church of the ruling minority, the rampart of the "Garrison," and England's first line of defence in Ireland. Subject to Parliament as regards her formularies and discipline, and to the Crown in the choice of her Bishops, she was one of the most important instruments of authority of the State. But her influence was rather secular than spiritual, for her clergy, forgetting their evangelical mission, made themselves agents of the Government. The emblem and instrument of English rule, the "Establishment" was a terrible burden to Catholic Ireland, and was hated even by the Presbyterians. Although laden with the plunder of the confiscations, and rich with the spoils of the Church of Rome, it yet extorted—by cruel and exacting methods—its annual revenue of tithes from the "Papist" peasants. In 1868 its yearly income amounted to £613,984. Of this sum £204,933 was drawn from rents paid by 10,000 tenants, distributed over 900 estates, and £364,225 from the tithe-rent charges. The Church had therefore a capital of about £16,000,000.[1] Excessive wealth inevitably led to

[1] Thom's *Official Directory*, 1903, p. 680. *Report of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the period* 1869-1880, Dublin, 1880, p. 6 and 7. Ball, *The Reformed Church in Ireland*, London, 1886, p. 270. See *Perraud, op. cit.*, II., 509, for the details of the methods employed in the letting of the Church lands (with reference to the

abuses. The dignitaries of the Church were rich and idle, whilst the lower clergy found it difficult to support existence. One half of the beneficiaries with incomes varying from £800 to £3,000, were absentees. In 1869 there were 199 parishes without a single Protestant inhabitant, and 107 containing on an average two or three Protestant families apiece, including the families of the parson and sexton.[2] Here and there churches and cathedrals were falling into decay. Such was the Irish Church which Macaulay in 1845 called " the most absurd and unjustifiable of all the institutions of the civilised world." Some years later Mr. Lowe, a Protestant M.P., speaking at Westminster of the same Church, said, "As a missionary Church it has failed utterly. The curse of barrenness is upon it, it has no leaves, it bears no blossoms, it yields no fruit. Cut it down : why cumbereth it the ground ? "

From the very beginning of the era of reparation, the Establishment, that instrument of conquest and of tyranny was doomed to destruction. On two previous occasions, England had endeavoured to save it by reforming it. In 1833 some of the more shocking abuses were removed,[3] and in 1838 the tithes were converted into a land tax to be paid by the landlords. These latter hastened to recoup themselves by raising the rents of their tenants in proportion. At last, in 1869, Mr. Gladstone passed sentence of dissolution on the whole

practices of certain Anglican Bishops like Lord Plunket) (*Ib.*, 303, etc.). See *Ib.*, II., 510, for an account of the incomes of some Anglican Bishops. *Cf.* on the Church of Ireland : Cobbett, *A History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland*, Dublin, 1867. Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, 1839-1841, 2 vols. John Lemoinne, *l'Eglise d'Irlande* (*Revue des Deux Mondes* for 15th July, 1843).

[2] W. Maziere Brady, D.D., *The English State Church in Ireland*, 1869, p. 158, etc. *Cf.* Cardinal Perraud, *op. cit.*, II., 512, etc. Lecky, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, II., 226-238.

[3] A certain number of benefices, bishoprics and archbishoprics were suppressed, and their revenues, with the proceeds of a new tax on the revenues of rich benefices, were applied to a special fund intended for the maintenance of the Protestant religion. (Perraud, *op cit.*, II p. 506, etc. Ball, *op. cit.*, p. 229).

institution, and carried the famous Act of Disestablishment. To use the French expression, he separated the (Episcopal) Church from the State. This was an important work, and it would be well to note its characteristics, if only to anticipate the comparisons which might be drawn between Mr. Gladstone's very liberal and reverent measure, and our recent French Law of Separation. By the Act of 1869 the Church of Ireland was disestablished and disendowed. But the Disestablished Church is still recognised by the State; she has only ceased to be a State Church, a temporal establishment imported by England for the use of her Garrison, and maintained in the midst and at the cost of Catholic Ireland. On the other hand, the Act did not secularise all the immense endowments handed over by the State to the Church at the Reformation; the Disestablished Church was put in a position to re-endow herself by means of what was left to her as compensation for her vested rights.

She has lost her political privileges and has ceased to send representatives to the House of Lords. She is no longer a political institution, nor an integral part of the State, and is subject neither to the Crown, nor to Parliament. She is at liberty to organise and govern herself as she wishes, and she has instituted a system of representative government, with Convocations of the clergy, diocesan and provincial Synods, and a General Synod.[4] The Disestablished Church continues to be recognised by the State, but as a religious, and not as a temporal institution. Her dignitaries have a certain order of precedence, and she is represented at official ceremonies. Her clergy are educated at the Divinity School of Trinity College. Practically, if not officially, Church and State still remain allied in Ireland.

4 The representatives of the laymen on the Synods outnumber those of the clergy in a proportion of two to one. The Bishops are elected by the Synod of the Province The management of the finances of the Disestablished Church is in the hands of the Representative Church Body, composed of 65 members, with laymen and ecclesiastics in equal numbers.

As for the property of the Disestablished Church, Cathedrals, Churches, with their contents, cemeteries and school-houses were all left to her free of charge, and she was allowed to buy back the rectories at a very low price.[5] The lands and tithes were handed over to a Commission of Liquidation, which was entrusted with the work of determining their value.[6] The Act reserved and indemnified all vested interests, including those of the landlords who owned benefices, and who were paid a sum of £778,888, those of the schoolmasters, the precentors, the vergers, the clerks, and even the grave-diggers. The surplus of the Church Fund has been devoted to various purposes. A capital sum was handed over to the Presbyterians in order to compensate them for the loss of the *Regium Donum*, and Maynooth also received a capital sum. The balance of the Church Fund was set aside for the relief of public suffering and misfortune in Ireland.[7]

Of all the vested interests, the most important were naturally the stipends of the clergy. The capitalised

5 The sites of the rectories, with the gardens and outhouses, were sold to the Disestablished Church for ten times the amount of the annual rent chargeable on these estates. As for the houses themselves, they were given free when there was no building charge (which was being paid by the State); when there was a building charge they were sold for what Mr. Gladstone called a " nominal price." (See *Hansard*, Vol. cxciv., p. 442; Vol. cxcv. p. 16-30). *Cf.* Gladstone's speech in the House of Commons, 26th July, 1870. *Cf.* a very interesting article by Rev. Dr. J. F. Hogan in the *Freeman's Journal*, 17th November, 1904.

6 The Church Temporalities Commission. In 1881 the work of this body was taken over by the Irish Land Commission. The lands were gradually sold and the tithes were capitalised. It was arranged that the landlords could buy back these tithes with money borrowed from the Exchequer, these loans to be payable in 45 years. For an account of the finances of the Disestablishment see the *Report of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the period* 1869-1880, Dublin, 1880.

7 The sum paid to Maynooth College was £372,331 (fourteen times the amount of the old annual grant). The Presbyterians received a capital sum of £749,799, plus various sums for non-capitalised annuities. Later Acts have made inroads upon the balance of the Church Fund, which amounted to £7,000,000. The Fund for Teachers' Pensions received £1,300,000; the Royal University an annuity of £20,000; the Congested Districts Board, £1,500,000; the Department of Agriculture, an annual grant of £70,000. A fund for giving relief

value of these stipends, calculated according to the mortality tables, and augmented by a bonus of 12 per cent., as a free gift from the State, was handed over to the Representative Church Body, acting for the Disestablished Church. From this source this body received a capital sum of £7,581,075, representing the incomes of the 2,043 clergymen in office at the time of the Disestablishment.[8] On this sum the Representative Church Body (having paid all claimants), has realised a profit of about £3,500,000,9 or about £6 per head of the Episcopalian population. It owes this result to the supplementary bonus, to good financial administration,

in times of famine and for paying off arrears of rent, received £2,750,000. (Acts of 1869, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1891, 1899, See the *Annual Reports* of the Irish Land Commission). Irishmen complain that the Church Fund has been saddled with expenses (for education, etc.) which should have been met by the Imperial Treasury (the Church Fund being reserved by law for the relief of national distress). Although not entirely spent, the Church Fund is now exhausted as regards its application to any further purpose.

8 As a matter of fact there were 2,282 clergymen in office. It is even said that during the years which preceded the Disestablishment the number of curates was increased in order to increase the claims for compensation. A small number of these clergymen profited by the provision in the Act which made commutation optional. They insisted that their incomes should be paid them regularly by the State.

9 These are the figures given by a Protestant, Mr. Houston, Q.C., in an article in the *Contemporary Review* of May 1st, 1894 (the author makes it £4,000,000, but this includes the £500,000 representing donations and legacies before 1870). Of this £3,500,000, the bonus of 12 per cent. furnished by the Treasury accounts for £812,258, various other transactions brought in £1,648,809; the remainder is drawn from profits arising from the financial administration of the £7,581,075 handed over to the Representative Church Body in 1871 (the Act capitalised the vested rights by taking as a basis an annual rate of interest of 3½ per cent. Moreover, for a considerable time the Representative Church Body obtained on an average 4 per cent. per annum for its money). The Representative Church Body capitalised a proportion of the profit realised on the Disestablishment, but the amount of this capitalised sum does not appear in its annual accounts. The surplus has been handed over each year to diocesan or other funds, so that all or a part of the voluntary contributions to the Church could be rendered available or capitalised during this time. In the Report of the Representative Church Body for 1904, the Disestablished Church is said to have a capital of £8,414,138. The sum total of voluntary contributions, donations, and legacies given to the Church by its members since 1870 amounted in the same year to £5,941,547. Taking the average number of Irish Episcopalians to be 600,000, this sum would represent an average annual contribution, during 34 years, of five shillings and ninepence per head. (See the *Annual Reports of*

to a system of composition, and, above all, to the large sum obtained by capitalisation.[10] This £3,500,000 does not include the £500,000 representing the donations and legacies received by the Church of Ireland since the year 1660, the year in which the Church was reconstituted after the Cromwellian wars.

Such is the re-endowment which the operation of the Act of Disestablishment secured to the Irish Church. This Church has now a secure and unassailable capital, whereas her former capital of £16,000,000, the result of the confiscations, produced but a small income, and was incessantly threatened by agrarian strife, and by Nationalist agitation.

It is obvious, then, that Disestablishment has not reduced the Irish Church to poverty. On the other hand, it has consolidated her position. She is no longer a privileged and tyrannical institution. Her independence has been restored, and her compromising connection with the Government and the "Castle" has been broken off. These "former friends" were, in reality, "her worst enemies,"[11] because of her long association with them in their system of persecution and confiscation. For this reason it is often said by her own dignitaries that the Irish Church gained more than she lost by the Act of 1869. According to pessimists like Lord Cairns and Archbishop Magee, Disestablishment was to be the ruin

the Proceedings of the Representative Body of the Church of Ireland, Dublin, Hodges and Figgis). I may add that the official heads of the Disestablished Church expressly deny that any re-endowment has arisen from the operation of the Disestablishment Act. It seems difficult to reconcile this denial with the facts of the case. (See moreover the statements made before the General Synod, 23rd April, 1903, by Dr. Traill, now Provost of Trinity College, Dublin). Dr. Traill is an influential member of the Representative Body. According to him, Mr. Gladstone estimated that out of a capital of £16,000,000, the working of the Act had assured to the Church a sum of £7,000,000, plus the value of the ecclesiastical buildings. (*Cf. Fortnightly Review*, March, 1901, p. 460).

[10] The stipends paid to the 2,282 archbishops, bishops, incumbents and curates in office in 1870, amounted in all to a sum of £589,665. (*Report of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities for* 1869-1880, Dublin, 1880, p. 8).

[11] The words of a Protestant author, Ball, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

of the Irish Episcopalian Church, but, as a matter of fact, it has been the means of infusing into her a new life. Her laymen have been brought into close connection with her clergy, and they are taking an increasing interest in matters connected with the administration of their Church. Hence the Low Church and anti-Ritualistic tendencies of the Irish Church in doctrine and formularies have become accentuated during the last thirty years, by contrast with the practices of the Church of England. After the Restoration of 1660, indeed, the sister Churches ceased to be in complete harmony with each other as regards the nature and form of their Protestantism. That event had introduced a certain amount of sacerdotalism into the Church of England, whereas the Church of Ireland retained the stamp of Puritanism. Nevertheless, after 1800, joint subjection to the Parliament and to the Crown was the means of maintaining a certain exterior uniformity between the two Churches, although evangelical tendencies manifested themselves amongst Irish laymen in the first half of the nineteenth century. Since the Disestablishment, while ritualism has gained ground in England, opposite tendencies have become accentuated in Ireland, both in consequence of the liberty enjoyed by the Disestablished Church, and because of the influence exercised by her laymen. The Creed and the Book of Common Prayer have been revised ; the more moderate Episcopalians have found it difficult to restrain the radicalism of the reformers, and more than once it has seemed as if secession were at hand. There are at the present time some "suspected" parishes (notably in Dublin), and even in the Divinity School of Trinity College there are evidences that ritualistic and rationalistic tendencies exist side by side. Yet Episcopalian Ireland, on the whole, is aggressively Low Church, and more nearly related in many ways to Calvinism than to Anglicanism. In Ireland the laymen, at least, are Protestant and nothing more ; unlike their brethren in England they are careful not to call themselves

"Catholic" into the bargain. Opposition always provokes extremes, and Protestant Ireland is especially anti-ritualistic on account of the close proximity of Catholicism. "They had got," said the late Colonel Saunderson, not long ago, "the real article (*i.e.*, Roman Catholicism) in Ireland, and they would not have a sham imitation of it."

All this tends to loosen the natural ties whereby the Church of Ireland was formerly attached to the Church of England. It also accentuates her isolation. A deep gulf separates her alike from the Catholic majority, from the irreconcilable Dissenters, and from the Church of England. Her bishops may extol the "Catholicity" of their Church, and call her the historic Church of Ireland. They may even declare that she is fifteen centuries old and is the only direct descendant of Saint Patrick and the first apostles, but in spite of all this her members come more and more to feel her particularist tendencies. Imperialists and Unionists in politics, they are Home Rulers and Nationalists in religious matters, and their isolation arises from their very independence. In the same way, each unit, whether it be a parish or a diocese, has a tendency to become isolated and to forget the interests of the whole community. Episcopalianism is tinged with Congregationalism, and the unity of the Church and her general welfare are no longer of supreme importance. Moreover, the Church of Ireland, the Church of the rich and privileged minority, has remained unprogressive. Canning defined the Irish Protestant as "a man who damns the Papists and never goes to Church." This definition is no longer strictly accurate, but it is impossible to deny that the religious zeal of the laity is lukewarm, and that political interest and the Ascendancy spirit are blended with the faith of this Anglican caste. Again, the social condition of the landlords is undergoing a great change, and they are the mainstay of the Church, and almost the only subscribers to its funds. Their incomes have been reduced by agrarian agitation, and by successive Land Acts. Many of them will undoubtedly

leave the country, taking with them their families and entourage, as soon as they have sold their property to the tenants under the Land Purchase Act. Every day there will be fewer Protestants in the country parts of Ireland. At the present time the number of parishes and dioceses is in excess of the needs of the diminishing congregations. Will it be possible to amalgamate dioceses and parishes without creating districts the extent of which will render efficient administration impossible? On the other hand, will the Church be prepared to give up that parochial organisation to which, for political and social reasons, she has always been so deeply attached? Except in Ulster and in the towns, it cannot be an easy task in the future to keep up a Church which seems fated by force of circumstances to watch the gradual disappearance of her flock.

Can she, on the other hand, hope to gain adherents amongst the Catholics? Officially, the Church of Ireland no longer undertakes the work of preaching to the Papists. She leaves that to certain proselytising Societies, which are under the patronage of some of her highest dignitaries. The majority of these Societies were founded at the beginning of the nineteenth century. They soon organised a vast relief system for the purpose of buying conversions. With this object they distributed large quantities of clothing and soup; hence the expressions, "souperism" and "soupers." The system was an exploitation of misery and want. It never appeared more odious than at the period of the Great Famine of 1847, when the people of the West died by thousands on the roadside, rather than accept the help offered as the price of their apostacy. At the present day only three or four of these Societies show any vitality;[12] they work in the poorest

[12] Setting aside the Educational Societies, I may mention the *Hibernian Bible Society* (founded 1806). This Society is engaged in selling and distributing Bibles. (In its Report for 1901-1902, it states that in 96 years it has placed in circulation 5,528,683 Bibles, that is 57,000 per year, or 184 per day; its annual income in 1901-1902 was £2,773). The *Irish Society* was founded in 1818, for the purpose of

quarters of the large towns, and in the poorest parts of the country. Open-air preaching, controversial meetings, Bible lectures at fairs and in market-places with magic lanterns to attract the crowd, alluring posters, visits from missionary agents who tour the country, and are occasionally attacked by an angry crowd—all these things have produced little or no effect. Children, however, cannot protect themselves, and it is to the children that these evangelizing societies principally direct their attention. They pick them up and buy them, either materially or morally, in order to educate them in Protestant schools, or to bring them up in special "Homes," which are adorned with the charming name of "Birds' Nests." This culpable traffic in the souls of children still flourishes in Dublin; in fact, a Catholic institution known as the Sacred Heart Home has been founded to counteract its proselytising influences. All liberal-minded Protestants stigmatise the system as scandalous and degrading. As yet, however, no one of authority in the Episcopalian world has stepped forward to condemn those corrupt practices, which only serve to irritate the Catholics, and to foster a spirit of religious strife. Surely the Church of Ireland loses more than she gains through the work of the propagandist societies, the Birds' Nests and the Scripture Readers. The conversion of a few children will not fortify Protestantism against the dangers which the future has in store for it. Ireland has become "Anglicised" during the nineteenth century. She has not, however, become "Anglicanised," and the official dethronement of Irish Episcopalianism has as its counterpart the expansion of Irish Catholicism during the last hundred years.

converting the Irish through the medium of their native language. (Receipts for 1901-1902, £4,285). *The Scripture Readers' Society* was founded in 1862, and *The Society for Irish Church Missions* in 1849; in 1901 the receipts of the latter society amounted to £15,528. The incomes of these societies are largely drawn from England.

III.—Catholicism.

When Irish Catholicism first emerged from the influence of the Penal Laws, all its energies seemed paralysed. Its churches had been seized or destroyed by the Protestants, and Mass was said in "chapels." These chapels had neither crosses, nor bells nor steeples, and were either hovels hidden in the back streets of the towns, out of sight of the intolerant Protestant "Garrison," or mud cabins with earthen floors in the country. In either case they were too small to contain the worshippers, of whom three-quarters were forced to kneel outside the doors. In many villages Mass was said in the open market-place. One day during Mass the roof of the chapel at Callan gave way and was held up on the shoulders of the men in the congregation until the conclusion of the ceremony. Until the year 1810, the offices of the Church were celebrated at Athy in a shop near the banks of the river. Until well into the nineteenth century there was only one Catholic "chapel" in Belfast. The clergy were all educated on the Continent at the Colleges of Louvain, Paris, Douai, or Salamanca, where they imbibed the traditional spirit of passive obedience to established laws and authorities. Loyalists and Conservatives, they were unshaken by persecution, but suffered in silence for fear of provoking new tyrannies. They hated the French Revolution, and fought energetically against the insurrection of the United Irishmen in 1798.

At the present day the contrast is very great, and it would be difficult to describe the impression of independent and vigorous strength which the outward manifestations of Irish Catholicism leave on the casual visitor. Out of 2,418 churches there is probably not one which was not built during the last century. Everywhere one meets with splendid cathedrals, built unfortunately with rather bad taste in the Italian or "Munichois" style. One might be inclined to think that these cathedrals are too

large, and that their wealth is out of proportion to the misery of the country; but it should be remembered that they are the only luxuries which Ireland allows herself, and are glorious witnesses to the piety of her people. The Marlborough Street Pro-Cathedral, in Dublin, was erected in 1825, not far from the celebrated Gothic Cathedrals, St. Patrick's and Christ Church, which have remained in the hands of the Protestants. In every village one finds a Catholic "chapel," white and gracious, close by that other church, the church of the landlord, where the ancestors of the villagers worshipped before the Reformation. This latter stands barred, mute, and frigid, whilst the Angelus chimes discreetly from the adjoining belfry.

There are in Ireland 588 priests belonging to the regular clergy[1]—Dominicans, Lazarists, Augustines, Jesuits, Capuchins, Redemptorists, Fathers of the Holy Ghost, and others—not counting the Brothers of St. Patrick, the Presentation Brothers, and, that noble order, the Christian Brothers, all of whom devote themselves to teaching.[2] The secular clergy who serve the 1,099 parishes of Ireland consist of 1,021 parish priests and 1,932 curates, administrators,[3] and others. They are under the authority

[1] *Irish Catholic Directory* for 1903. Ireland has 212 monasteries, 86 for priests and 126 for monks, in addition to 375 convents.

[2] See earlier chapter on Education.

[3] This is the title given to the priest charged with the management of a parish of which the Bishop is parish priest. Like the other curates, the administrators are removable. The parish priests are permanent. The Bishop has full authority to nominate the parish priests, curates and administrators. Irish ecclesiastical property (such as churches, schools, presbyteries, etc.) is administered in the following way:—In every diocese it is vested in the name of four or five trustees, including the Bishop, the Vicar-General, and sometimes, though rarely, a layman. On the death of a trustee, the survivors elect a new member. Formerly there were parochial trustees as in America, but the inclination now is to have only diocesan trustees. There are no "associations cultuelles," and no vestry-boards; the parish priest is responsible only to his bishop for the management of the temporal affairs of his parish. When, owing to the building of a church or a school, there are heavy expenses in prospect, the priest forms a committee composed of an equal number of laymen and of ecclesiastics to collect the money and to consider the plans. When the expenses have been met, the accounts are usually published. (See an interesting article on this subject by Mgr. Boyle, in the *Correspondant*, November 10th, 1905).

of twenty-three Bishops and four Archbishops of the Province of Ireland.[4] This ecclesiastical army has as its centre the celebrated Seminary of Maynooth,[5] picturesquely situated a few miles from Dublin, in County Kildare, on what was formerly the property of the Duke of Leinster. Within its walls still stands the Protestant chapel belonging to the estate, open every Sunday for Protestant service.

But for the rather frigid regularity of its great buildings, which still look very new, and the somewhat affected magnificence of the Chapel of St. Patrick which stands beside the College cloisters, Maynooth, with its park, its fields, its river, and, in a sense, its student life with outdoor recreation such as riding and games, resembles a great English University. It is the largest Seminary in the Christian world, giving education, as it does, to about 600 young men intended for Holy Orders.[5] The majority of these will "serve" in Ireland; the remainder, with priests specially trained at All Hallows College for foreign missions, will be sent either to the New World or to the Antipodes. As the mission of early Ireland was to teach the European continent the faith of nations, so the mission of modern Ireland seems to have been that of establishing Catholicism in the Anglo-Saxon communities beyond the seas. It was Ireland that, during the nineteenth century, gave Australia all her clergy, including the eminent Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal Moran. Ireland watched over the infancy of Catholicism in the

4 The Irish Bishops are chosen as follows:—A presentation list containing three names (*dignus, dignior, dignissimus*), is drawn up by the assembled parish priests of the diocese and members of the Chapter. The Bishops of the province, summoned by order of the Metropolitan, make what comments they wish upon this list, which is afterwards forwarded to Rome. The Pope, of course, need not necessarily choose the new Bishop from amongst the names mentioned on the list, but, as a matter of fact he almost invariably does so, and he usually selects the *dignissimus*.

5 About 80 priests are ordained per year at Maynooth; 70 per cent. of the Irish secular clergy come from Maynooth, and the remainder from the Irish Colleges in Paris or Rome, and from the diocesan seminaries in Carlow, Thurles, Wexford, or Waterford. (*Cf. Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland, Appendix III.* p. 284. *Maynooth College, its Centenary History*).

United States, and still provides the whole of Western America with priests. In America to-day the dignitaries of the Church of Rome, from Cardinal Gibbons to Dr. Ireland, the Archbishop of St. Paul's, are almost exclusively Irish. Ireland is a nation of missionaries, and has well deserved the title of "Mother of all the Catholic Churches of the Anglo-Saxon world." The great office of the Apostle, *Peregrinari pro Christo*, has been as nobly filled by her priests in the nineteenth as by her monks in the seventh century.

Always a faithful servant of the Holy See, Ireland herself, at the present day, enjoys the largest tolerance in the exercise of the Catholic religion, and this under a Protestant and an English government. The endowment of Maynooth[6] is the only subsidy granted by the State to Irish Catholicism. The priest lives on the contributions which he receives from his parishioners at Christmas and Easter,[7] and on fees for Masses and ceremonies; and, considering the poverty of his surroundings, he is generously paid. He cannot be elected to any political assembly, nor to any public office, and is forbidden by law to wear his soutane in public, an interdiction which may, indeed, have the advantage of bringing priest and

6 In 1869 Maynooth received the sum of £372,331, representing fourteen years purchase of the annual grant which had formerly been allotted to her. The interest on this sum represents only a third part of the annual expenses of Maynooth. (*Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland, Appendix III.*, p. 285).

7 It is rather difficult to ascertain the annual totals of the parochial contributions. Some years ago, Dr. O'Donnell, the Bishop of Raphoe, computed that they averaged between six and seven shillings per family in the poor districts of the West. (This included contributions for the erection and maintenance of churches; see *Financial Relations Commission, Evidence I.*, 17). A proportion of the annual contributions is given by the parish priest to his curates; moreover, each priest gives an annual contribution (*cathedraticum*) to the Bishop of the diocese. The latter also enjoys the revenues of two parishes of which he is officially parish priest, and which are managed for him by an administrator. In 1862, Mgr. Perraud estimated that the average stipend paid annually to an Irish parish priest was £200, to a curate £80, and to a Bishop £500. Mgr. Boyle estimates that the average revenues of the Irish clergy are as follows:—Bishops, £600 to £1,000; parish priests, £200 to £400; curates, £80 to £200. (*Correspondant*, November 10th, 1905).

people closer together.[8] In every other respect he is his own master. The Catholic religion in Ireland is not interfered with either by legal restrictions or by police regulations; and in no country does the secular arm show more respect for religion and its ministers. This is a most striking example of tolerance towards a conquered counrty, and the lesson which it teaches should not be forgotten by other nations, and in particular by France.

IV.—The Nineteenth Century.

For over a hundred years the Irish priest has taken a prominent part in politics. He is to be found at all the elections, whilst at almost every popular meeting the local parish priest is to be seen on the platform, the clergy being, of course, in the great majority, Nationalist.

They became Nationalists in the course of the nineteenth century; as the priests educated under the *ancien régime* gave place to new men from Maynooth, they gradually became Nationalists. Maynooth was founded in 1795, in consequence of an Act of Parliament which authorised the allocation of an annual grant[1] for the establishment of a Catholic "Academy." The Irish Bishops had intended that the Academy should be both an ecclesiastical Seminary and a lay College, and in some respects it is to be regretted that this dual system had to be abandoned owing to want of funds.[2] It was hoped that the Irish clergy would be conciliated by the offer of education at home at the expense of the Government. The Government expected, too, that this new system would preserve the clergy from those advanced ideas which at that time prevailed over a portion of the

8 I may add that the Emancipation Act of 1829 maintained the prosciiption of the religious orders. Though this provision has fallen into desuetude, it has never been repealed, and judges are sometimes obliged to annul gifts and legacies to religious communities.

1 Originally £8,000, gradually raised to £26,360 and converted in 1869 to a capital sum.

2 The Lay College came to an end in 1817.

Continent. These anticipations proved false. The majority of the Bishops were men of the Pale, anxious to be on good terms with the Castle. The hatred which they bore towards the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland made them favour the Union with England; in fact one of the principal authors of this Union was Dr. Troy, the Archbishop of Dublin. The new generation, on the other hand, drank in a fervent spirit of nationality at Maynooth. These young priests were sons of peasants. As children they had seen their parents oppressed and sometimes evicted by the landlord, obliged to pay tithes to the parson, and excluded as Catholics from voting and from all public offices. During a long residence abroad the clergy educated under the old system had forgotten these lessons, but the men of the new generation never lost touch with the land of their birth, and were therefore easily influenced by the progress of patriotic ideas. The echo of the social and political awakening of Ireland was heard as clearly at Maynooth as anywhere in Ireland.

This fact was particularly obvious on the occasion of the famous Concordat affair. Anxious to have some hold over the clergy, England wished Rome to allow her a veto in the nomination of Bishops. In exchange for this privilege she proposed that the State should pay the priests. When this plan was laid before the Bishops in 1799, many of these latter expressed themselves unofficially in favour of it, and a garbled version of their statements was laid before Parliament in 1808.[3] Thereupon a storm of indignation arose in Ireland. The Irish people declared that they would rather forego Catholic Emancipation than receive it in exchange for a Veto which would convert the Bishops into agents of the Government. The

3 Ponsonby, referring to the statement made by the episcopal trustees of Maynooth, alleged that the Irish Catholics would allow the King of England to become the spiritual director of their Church. In two books, *Corrispondenza inedite dei Cardinali Consaloi e Pasca* (Turin, 1903), and *Il Congresso di Vienna e la Santa Sede* (Rome, 1904), P. Ilario Rinieri gives some interesting details as to the Anglo-Roman negotiations on the subject of the Veto.

Bishops yielded, and published an official refusal of the offer.[4] It is safe to predict that this offer will not be accepted on any future occasion. Nevertheless, the Holy See was not unfavourable to the plan. In 1812 Monsignor Quarantotti pressed the Irish people to accept it, and Pope Pius VII. was of the same mind. Ireland protested respectfully but firmly. The Bishops sent memorials and deputations to Rome for the purpose of making representations to the Pope as to the consequences of the measure. Dr. Doyle was asked before a Commission of Enquiry what he would do if the Veto were granted. "I would protest; I would protest a second time; and if that were not sufficient, I would resign my Bishop's ring, and there is not a Bishop in Ireland who would not do the same." Matters, however, did not come to such a pass. After Waterloo England let the question drop, and nothing more was heard of it.[5] Nevertheless, the whole affair had afforded a curious instance of religious intransigeance and political capacity on the part of the Irish people. They had shown themselves stricter than their Bishops, and more "papistical" than the Pope. They were not Gallican, for they only upheld the liberties of their Church against the civil powers; nor Ultramontane, for they placed themselves in successful opposition to the wishes of Rome. They showed themselves capable of combining the respect due to the spiritual authority of the Papacy, with that degree of independence which is permitted with regard to temporal affairs.

In the first half of the nineteenth century two men in particular stood out as embodiments of the new spirit which had arisen amongst the clergy. They were Dr. MacHale (1791-1881), Bishop of Killala, and afterwards Archbishop of Tuam, and Dr. Doyle (1786-1834), Bishop

4 The Catholic aristocracy of Ireland, in alliance with the English Catholics, differed from the Irish popular party upon this question. O'Connell, who opposed the Veto, soon took command of the popular party.

5 It reappeared in 1821 and 1825, but with no chance of success.

of Kildare and Leighlin. In an age when the "Castle Prelates" were still powerful, and when public opinion was paralysed, these ardent patriots exerted themselves to raise the courage of their followers, and to help forward the constitutional struggle. At the same time they utterly discountenanced the crimes of the Ribbonmen. In his *Letters from Hieropolis* (1820) MacHale claimed religious equality, and carried the war into the enemy's camp by attacking the Established Church and Protestant proselytism. Two years later, over the celebrated initials of J. K. L.,[6] Doyle wrote a series of powerful and brilliant letters in reply to an attack made by the Protestant Archbishop Magee. The effect of these letters was enormous. Since the days of Swift and the *Drapier Letters* no pamphlet had made such an impression. Copies of them were posted up on the walls; on Sundays after Vespers they were read aloud to the assembled peasants. When O'Connell had finished one of MacHale's letters he cried: "Here, at least, is one able man, on whom I can rely, and there is also J. K. L., quite as logical, as eloquent, as courageous. With their help I can fight and win." Under the direction of O'Connell and of these two prelates, the clergy entered the political arena in 1823. They took part in the campaign in favour of Emancipation, and fought for the abolition of tithes. They were also engaged in the unsuccessful struggle for Repeal, and, faithful to O'Connell, they opposed the "Young Ireland" movement, which was nevertheless countenanced by some of the younger priests.[7] They stifled the insurrection of 1848 in its birth, and recalled the people from the edge of the abyss of revolution.

Ardent politicians as they were, these ecclesiastics of the new school were uncompromising in religious matters. From 1831 to 1850 they opposed the clergy of the *ancien*

6 James, Kildare and Leighlin.

7 Especially by those at Maynooth. (*Cf. Maynooth College, its Centenary History*, p. 450).

régime over the education question. Their principal adversary in this matter was the old Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Murray (1768-1852). As I have already said, the system of primary education was that organised in 1831 by Stanley (Lord Derby). The principle underlying this system was that of united secular, and separate religious instruction. Was this so-called " national " system to be accepted ? It was favoured by Dr. Murray and by the majority of the Bishops, but was vigorously opposed by Dr. MacHale, who was, as ever, ready for the struggle. He pointed out that the new law was in reality a new effort on the part of the official or officious Protestant proselytisers. Not content with maintaining expensive schools throughout the country, they had been gradually extending the sphere of their propagandist societies, under the pretence of doing charitable work. The fears expressed by the Archbishop of Tuam were not without foundation. For a period of twenty years the so-called " national " system, under the guidance of the Protestant Archbishop Whately, was indeed aimed at the " conversion " of Ireland.[8]

The Education Act was finally accepted in Ireland, and tacitly approved by Rome.[9] All this, however, did not prevent the schools from being in practice organised according to the different creeds, that is to say, in direct contravention of the Act. Archbishop MacHale, moreover, was to have his revenge. The same question arose in 1845, when Sir Robert Peel instituted the three Queen's Colleges on a purely secular basis, to the exclusion of

[8] *Life of Dr. Whately*, p. 244. " The Education supplied by the National Board," wrote Dr. Whately, " is gradually undermining the vast fabric of the Irish Roman Catholic Church."

Cf. p. 246. " I believe that mixed education is gradually enlightening the mass of the people, and that if we give it up, we (the Protestants) give up the only hope of weaning the Irish people from the abuses of Popery. But I cannot venture openly to profess this opinion. I cannot openly support the Board of Education as an instrument of conversion. I have to fight its battles with one hand, and that my best, tied behind me. ' *Cf.* Perraud, II., pp. 319-412.

[9] With the reservation (imposed by the Synod of Thurles in 1850), that all the school books should be approved by the Bishop.

any religious element. Should such establishments be authorised? Dr. Murray thought that after certain precautions had been taken they should have a fair trial. Dr. MacHale was entirely against them. Amongst the laymen the difference of opinion was no less marked. O'Connell was irreconcilable, whereas "Young Ireland," impregnated with ideas of toleration and union, found itself by a curious irony of events in alliance with the old loyalist prelate, who was ever a *persona grata* with the Castle. This time Rome declared against the Queen's Colleges, and they were condemned by the Synod of Thurles in 1850 as "dangerous to faith and morals." The result was the triumph of the extreme Catholics, not on account of Ultramontane ideas or pressure from Rome, but because it was necessary to protect Catholic youth from the dangers of proselytism.

The boycotting of the Queen's Colleges is, perhaps, to be regretted from the point of view of the social development of Ireland; had they been supported, the education of the present day might have been better, and the spirit of religious warfare less widespread. The real fault, however, lies with England and her representatives, and is due to their endeavours to "convert" Ireland. A lay friend of mine once summarised the situation thus: "If we lived in Spain we would be tolerant, but in this country tolerance is too expensive a luxury."

Moreover, Liberalism was not popular in the fifties. In Ireland as elsewhere there was a reaction against the revolutionary tendencies of 1848. The Irish clergy were at this time under the influence of a venerable prelate, who, after a long residence in Rome, had returned to Ireland with Ultramontane principles and a horror of all popular movements. Dr. Cullen (1800-1877) was Archbishop successively of Armagh and of Dublin, and was also the first Irish Cardinal. He refused to allow his priests to take any part in agrarian or political affairs, and in elections he only permitted them to intervene

in favour of the Whig friends of the Government.[10] The times were unpropitious for Ireland and for her clergy.

It was only in 1880 that these latter returned to the ranks of the Nationalist army, summoned thither by the voice of a new MacHale, Dr. Croke (1842-1902), formerly a pupil of the Irish College at Paris, and a Young Irelander in his youth. Dr. Croke remained an ardent patriot, and was the true leader of the clergy during the crisis of 1880-1890. He was the popular idol of the nation to as great an extent as either Parnell or Davitt. He was the first of his order to become an acknowledged member of the Land League, and his example was followed by numbers of the parochial clergy. It was felt that this great Church dignitary was assuming a heavy responsibility in allying himself openly with the agitators. It was thought that the movement would be accompanied by crimes, and that this fact would react unfavourably upon the prestige of the clergy. On the other hand, when it was a question of life and death for Ireland, were the clergy justified in refusing their aid to a nation which had suffered so much and so long for the Catholic faith? If the priests were to fail the Irish people in the hour of danger, would they not lose all influence over their flocks? Surely it would be better for them to direct the movement into safe channels than to be helpless witnesses of its violence?

In this great crisis, then, the priests played the part of patriots. Although their speeches were sometimes exceedingly violent, they usually contented themselves with giving counsel, and seldom took an active part in

[10] He fought the survivors of the Repeal Movement, G. H. Moore, Smith O'Brien, J. B. Dillon. Nevertheless, Dr. MacHale, to whom he was deeply attached, kept the spirit of patriotism alive in the West. In 1851-1852, aided by a fair number of the clergy, he supported the Irish Tenant League and the Independent Parliamentary Party which C. G. Duffy had founded. When Sadlier and Keogh betrayed the cause, he opposed Dr. Cullen who supported the two so-called champions of the Church. Thereupon the future Cardinal became most unpopular in Ireland; in fact, complaints against Dr. Cullen were even forwarded to Rome, where, however, they met with scant attention.

the direction of affairs. To a certain extent, indeed, they were forced to go with the tide. But they set their faces steadfastly against crime, and the worst outrages always occurred in those districts where the clergy had taken no part in the movement. But for the priests, anarchy would have been rampant, and Fenianism would have reigned supreme.

The authorities of the Church, however, did not always approve of the political responsibilities assumed by the Irish clergy. In 1883, Mgr. Croke subscribed to a testimonial to Mr. Parnell. England induced Rome to call him to account for this act; and in a note signed by two Cardinals, the clergy were forbidden to have anything to say to the testimonial. In order to show their disapproval of this course, the public hastened to increase their subscriptions to the fund.

In 1888, owing to fresh intrigues on the part of England, the Holy See sent over Mgr. Persico[11] to enquire into the condition of affairs. Before he had time to return to Rome, the celebrated Rescript of the Propaganda was issued without his knowledge (April 23rd, 1888). This Rescript, which was signed by Cardinal Monaco, condemned the system of boycotting and the Plan of Campaign. It was a confidential document, intended only to serve as a guide to the Irish clergy *in foro conscientiae*. Its premature publication in England seemed, therefore, a betrayal, and angered the Irish people all the more because the condemnation, while indisputable in theory, was founded on certain errors of fact, and took no account whatever of the exceptional circumstances of the country. Public indignation was so great that the Episcopacy was for a time helpless. In a Declaration published 30th May the Bishops insisted on obedience to the Rescript. The political leaders, in reply, protested strongly against

[11] Interesting letters from Mgr. Persico to Cardinal Manning were published in the *United Irishman*, Dublin, 24th April, 1904. Their author is represented as a lover of Ireland, who was more surprised than anyone else at the publication of the Rescript, and had been kept in complete ignorance of its existence.

the improper interference of Rome in Irish affairs. The Pope issued another Letter to the Irish Bishops, but the people refused to submit to it. For some months there were violent quarrels between the more advanced politicians and those Bishops who were anxious that the Rescript should be obeyed. Ultimately, the clergy retired *en masse* for a time from the League, and this was the only result of the Rescript.

In 1890, however, the Irish clergy re-entered the political arena on the outbreak of the scandal which led to the death of Parnell. After some hesitation they decided to throw all their influence against Parnell and his followers, and at various elections from 1891 to 1895 they secured the success of the anti-Parnellites. Like the people themselves, however, the clergy soon grew tired of these inglorious quarrels. Yet they still retain their political influence, which has only been strengthened by twenty years of Unionist rule. If a system of self-government were granted to Ireland, it is probable that the influence of the priests in politics would diminish. Even as it is, they no longer interfere to the same extent. During the last ten or twelve years most of them, whether in town or country, have retired from the sphere of politics. Their action has been due to motives of prudence and reserve and not to motives of indifference. But who is to say if they will ever regain their former power ?

V.—The Power of the Clergy : Its Cause.

In truth, the political power of the Catholic clergy is but one of the forms, and not even the chief form, of that sort of supremacy or preponderating influence which in certain respects they exercise in Ireland. But that supremacy is no absolute one, at least in the temporal domain. Certain interested persons choose to represent Ireland as a priest-ridden country, a slave to the priest,

but such exaggeration is to be distrusted. It is by virtue of his personal qualities that the priest possesses influence outside the spiritual domain. The penetration of the Irish peasant enables him to judge the man beneath the priest, and he will either follow his adviser or not, according to this judgment. Once let his adviser be mistaken and confidence in him is gone. We must always beware of the cry that Ireland is the victim of "Ultramontanism" and in danger of "being Romanised," that by mistaking "Rome's" interests for her own, she tends to be but a "Roman province," and that her sovereign is the "Bishop of Rome" rather than the King of England. Home Rule, it is said, will be Rome Rule; therefore beware of it. The answer to this has been given by the Catholics of England. Do they not reproach Ireland for her lack of obedience to Rome? Religion in Ireland has indeed a close connection with the national life; the atmosphere of public opinion is charged with it; it intervenes in all social and political affairs; but this is the result of three centuries of a persecution that was at the same time national and religious. But Ireland has always shown herself able to distinguish politics from religion. O'Connell declared that though Ireland took her religion from Rome, she would as soon go to Constantinople for her politics, and in this phrase he reflected the sentiments of the people. That their sentiments have not changed is shown by the current dictum: *Our religion from Rome, our politics from home.*

None the less it is true that in no country is the moral ascendancy of the clergy so great. In religion and in morals their authority is indisputable and undisputed. In the matter of education they are sometimes criticised, but always obeyed. When a difficulty arises between a tenant and landlord it is the priest who is always approached that he may negotiate a settlement. When in 1898 Ireland had to undergo her apprenticeship in local government, the priests helped in her training, and to them was due the success of the experiment. Even

in politics, as is well known, the voice of the clergy carries the greatest weight, and this, though on many occasions, notably during the Plan of Campaign, their advice was rejected by the country. The power of the Irish clergy may be traced to two principal causes, the one psychological—the faith and the essentially religious character of the nation—the other historical, the fact that the priest has been for centuries the sole guide and the sole protector of the Irish people.

Few race characteristics are so profoundly marked as is the intensity of religious feeling in the Celtic races, and, above all, in the Irish race. They would seem to have instinctively adopted the Catholic religion. They were predestined for it by their spiritual aspirations, by that idealism of their nature which is ever in contact with the other world, by that mysticism, with its contempt for the unreality of this world, which would seem to have safeguarded not only the Irish people but most people of Celtic blood, from Protestant rationalism. Another condition bearing upon this, may, perhaps, be found in the Gaelic language, with its profoundly religious spirit and consequent contrast to the Anglo-Saxon tongue. Indeed, in the materialistic and utilitarian character of the latter many minds have come to see a danger to the faith of Ireland. Three centuries of persecution have but attached Ireland more deeply to that faith, and her fidelity to it is all the more meritorious, if indeed we may not say heroic, for the fact. To-day that living and fervent faith which is so different from the cold observance by the Anglo-Saxon of his utilitarian and secular religion would seem, in truth, to have become portion of the race and of the nationality, so that the one cannot be distinguished from the other. Her religion is in the blood of Ireland. It is a second nature, a hereditary and traditional instinct, which has no need to be reasoned in order to be profound. It has not, in fact, as a rule, reduced itself to reason, nor sought out a philosophical basis, as is indeed natural in a country in which education

is behindhand and culture and the philosophic spirit are rare. There may then be a foundation of truth, with some exaggeration, in some remarks made by a Catholic Englishman to the writer a short while ago. He contended that Irish religion was of the race rather than of the individual. "The Irish," he said, "are Catholic because they are Irish, and Irish because they are Catholic. They will not allow that I, as an Englishman, am a Catholic, for that is a privilege which belongs to them. They hate me, who am a Catholic, because I am an Englishman, and above all because I am a Catholic Englishman."

If it be true that piety, like morality, has somewhat declined in Ireland during the last half-century, the reason is not far to seek. It may be found in the brutally abrupt introduction of the elements of a semi-education and a semi-civilisation, both foreign to the spirit of the race, into a social *milieu* which had remained primitive. The first, if not the only results of this, were bound to be bad. Certainly in the existing state of things the Irish are hardly better armed for the struggles of their spiritual, than they are for those of their material lives. The transition from the morally wholesome conditions of life in Ireland to those of the slums in the great English and American towns is so brusque that the wastage, consequent on emigration, is enormous. The English Catholic of whom we have spoken would not hesitate to say at this point that the great obstacle to the conversion of England is the Irishman. Study, he will say, the impiety of life among the Irish in England and America. Certain persons have estimated, though probably not without some exaggeration, that during the last sixty years, half of the Irish emigrants or the descendants of the Irish immigrants in the United States, have been lost to Catholicism and to every sort of positive religion. And yet, no one can visit Ireland without being impressed by the intensity of Catholic belief there, and by the fervour of its outward manifestations. Watch the

enormous crowds of people who fill the churches in the towns, the men as numerous as the women ; see them all kneeling on the flagstones, without a sound or gesture, as though petrified in prayer ! Go to early Mass on Sundays in Dublin and watch three or four priests simultaneously giving the Sacrament to throngs of communicants too great for the size of the churches. Observe in the country, above all in the West, the regular recitation of the Rosary in the family, the frequent practice of fasting two days before Communion, the " stations " held at Easter and Christmas in every hamlet, with general Confession and Communion, by the parish priest who goes to the houses of the people and celebrates in them the Holy Sacrifice, according to a touching custom which dates from the times of persecution. How can we fail to admire a piety so ardent and so simple ? And if the critics discern in it traces of that light and mobile nature, which so often makes the Irish peasant a grown-up child, let us at least recognise that of all European peoples Ireland is the most fundamentally religious, and that to her may most justly be applied, if ever it may be applied, the Divine saying : " Go, thy faith hath made thee whole ! "

Loving his religion, the Irish peasant loves his Church. His Church is his mistress, as the popular proverb says. She is the spiritual authority to whom he owes respect and obedience ; the jewel which England has not been able to snatch from him, the only permanent organisation, the only national expression of present and of past Ireland. Here are reasons enough for love ! In times of trial she has been his only support. Under Elizabeth and Cromwell, under the Penal Laws, the priest suffered with the people. He remained faithful to them unto death and martyrdom. Thus were friendship and union sealed between priest and people. The priest gained for ever the gratitude and veneration of the people ; he became their guide, their friend, their protector, and won that title which he still bears, *Sagart a rúin*, the beloved

priest. Nothing could be more touching to see than this attachment which still exists, this respect, this confidence, this intimacy, between the priest and his parishioners. The parish priest, as one meets him in the small towns of the West, with his high hat and sombre garb, his great, strong frame, and ruddy face, leaves a striking image in the mind. As he walks by, with his grave and keen-faced young curate, every hat is lifted, but he answers only with an amiable word addressed to each, for if he returned salutes his hat would very soon be worn out. He seems to be a king in his kingdom, affable, courteous, tolerant with non-Catholics, familiar with his flock, above all "popular." He is in truth the father of his people, and no doubt an authoritative enough father. He is the arbiter of their quarrels, the confidant of their secrets. To him they turn for advice, whether in affairs of the heart or of the pocket. In return the people are ready to do him any service and to render him any homage. How many priests must there not be in Ireland of the kind made familiar by Canon Sheehan in his charming story of ecclesiastical life, *My New Curate*, famous for its picture of old Father Dan, with his delicacy and wit! What simplicity and gaiety are to be found amongst all those clerics who, like the legendary Father O'Flynn, sung of by A. P. Graves, do not intend to leave all the gaiety to the laity, for "May not the clergy be Irishmen too?" There is no stiff haughtiness, no wall of stone separating them from their flock; they make themselves loved by their good grace, and their ruggedness at need. Withal they are generous, and full of life and spirit; when they travel in France our rural clergy give them a singular impression of passivity which they explain by the dependence of the latter in the past upon the State. But if they are themselves so strong and popular, it must not be thought that this is due solely to their independence of the Government, to the fact that they are sustained and supported by the people. The question runs up to a higher plane: their strength lies in the faith and piety

of Ireland, in that a whole nation believes, and practices its beliefs. There is another factor in the situation. The Irish priest is not merely the spiritual shepherd, he is the guide and counsellor in temporal affairs. The facts of history have made him a leader, and often the sole leader, of the people. The Irish nation might have had, like others, its national aristocracy, its cultivated middle class, if the English conquest had not checked the natural course of development of the country, without creating new and lasting social conditions. In the eighteenth century, when the perfecting of the conquest was followed by the organisation of oppression, Ireland had no longer either an aristocracy, for the land was in the hands of English and Protestant landlords, nor a middle class, for the middle class had been anihilated or had fled. The nation was nothing but an unorganised *plebs* of destitute peasants. These were the slaves of an ascendancy and of a government foreign in race and religion ; and the only leaders left, endowed at once with education and with the confidence of the people, were the clergy.

Consider the situation even to-day as it is in the country districts. In the West the priest is usually the only person in the village who has any education. He is, in the four provinces, the only capable counsellor, the only leader who is obeyed. The strong farmers, the village shopkeepers, lack education and authority. As for the politicians the people make use of them, but appraise them at what they are worth. The landlord ? More often than not he has not a common interest, a common sentiment, with the people in whose eyes he must inevitably be an enemy or a suspect, even if he be a Catholic, for in that case he is a traitor who has sold his country to keep his lands.

In the towns the case is a little different, but the same historical causes give the clergy an exceptional influence. We note here also the absence, or at least the inadequacy in numbers and in influence of a middle class possessed of

the training, independence, and culture necessary to fit it for its intellectual and social role. A new *bourgeoisie* is no doubt beginning to form itself on the ruins of the old, but secondary education is so inadequate and behind-hand, and higher education still so cruelly defective, that among the Catholics of Ireland, even among the liberal classes, there are but few to be found who possess any real culture. We find, on the contrary, a certain form of intellectual apathy very widespread, a distaste for mental effort, a certain absence of the critical sense, a lack of individual judgment which is all the more remarkable inasmuch as the Irish, like the French, exhibit naturally in society a caustic raillery of mind, and the gift of psychology. The phenomenon manifests itself not only among the Catholics, but almost equally among the Protestant Ascendancy ; for it is one of time's revenges that the Penal Laws have left their impress hardly less disastrously upon the persecutors than upon the persecuted. We touch a question of capital importance when we come to general education, but it is one which, in fact, will interest very few people, either Catholic or Protestant. Ireland has never bred any great champion of Catholicism such as Montalembert, Ward or Windhorst. One could easily count the men whose settled and cultured minds, and genuine independence, fit them to serve as a point of support of a sane and thoughtful public opinion, or to act as a counterpoise to the influence of the clergy in the national life. They are isolated units, too few in number and too badly organised to make their influence felt ; and it is in the nature of things that the mass of the people should continue to lean upon their old protectors, the clergy.

The priests themselves are, moreover, the first to recognise that a state of society which lacks an educated laity must be abnormal and unhealthy. They are the first to desire the development of an educated and liberal middle class from whom they will claim only the recognition of their rights in matters of faith and morals.

But for the ultimate source of the evil we must ever recur to the persecutions and the Penal Laws. That regime deprived Ireland of her directing classes, and thereby assured the supremacy of the clergy. It reduced the people as inevitably to ignorance as to poverty ; and there followed necessarily the results that are seen to-day, inertia, lethargy of opinion, lack of liberty of mind, of energy, and of power of moral resistance. The Irish Catholic still wears the mark of servitude ; he is still, as De Beaumont said and as he himself affirms, half a slave, by reason of his ignorance and weakness of character. But the evil is decreasing. Ireland is raising herself up, little by little, from her ancient servitude. The " Papists " are beginning to claim their rights, and to make themselves and their religion respected. Education is improving ; the middle class is growing, and with it the liberal and cultured nucleus. As these forces become stronger, the causes of the supremacy of the clergy will decrease. When Ireland has created that really educated and independent middle class, which is at present her most urgent need, one may predict the disappearance of what is now abnormal and will then be extravagant, inasmuch as it will no longer respond to a necessity in fact, that is to say, the temporal supremacy of the Catholic clergy.

VI.—The Results.

When the matter is looked at from the point of view of history, it is clear that the temporal power of the Church is but a transitory phase in the social evolution of the country, a legacy of the past, a necessary product of peculiar conditions for which England and her representatives in Ireland, the constant denouncers of the clergy, are primarily responsible. What we are concerned with is the use which they have made of their power. We do not pretend that the Irish priests have

always been impeccable and infallible in the temporal domain. They are men, and it is not in men, and above all in a class of men, to be without fault. They have been reproached for their love of power, and for occasional abuse of their authority. It has been said that they have not allowed the laymen enough liberty in deed and in thought, that is to say, in questions outside the sphere of faith and morals. On the other hand, we have to note the avowal of Sir Horace Plunkett, an Irish Protestant, who recognises that "the immense power of the Roman Catholic clergy has been singularly little abused." [1] It has been said that they have made excessive demands upon the people's purse, notably by the increase of fees for marriages, and the like; that they are somewhat selfish, that they live, and live too comfortably, among a poverty-stricken people; but as a fact, the people of Ireland have always counted it a point of honour to make life easy for the men of God. Generally speaking, we may call the influence of the clergy during the nineteenth century a conservative and a moderating influence, apter to restrain evil than to forward good, and to check the feet of their flock on the downward, rather than to urge them along the upward path. How could it have been otherwise, at least at the beginning, when recent persecution and constant oppression provoked an enslaved people to violence and to revolt, which called for a repressive and soothing hand, for the bridle and not the whip?

The most powerful agent of peace that ever worked in Ireland is the Catholic Church, and England can never give thanks enough to her. If this agent of peace has not always been able to eliminate the causes of trouble it has always counter-balanced their action, and cancelled their effects. "The Irish would be free long ago," said John Mitchel, the revolutionary, "but for their damned souls." Not only have the clergy as a body always held

[1] *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 106.

aloof from any movement of rebellion,[2] but they have sapped the bases of every insurrection and paralysed all the efforts of Fenianism, and all the activity of secret societies, by the threat of excommunication. One has but to think of the extent of their power, their influence in public life, even to the very furthest hamlet hidden in the country, and the firm and eager loyalty which is given them by the people, and then ask oneself what would have happened if they had taken their stand on the side of revolutionary action.

The clergy have taken part in the legal and constitutional agitation as much out of patriotism as from fear of the revolutionary movement. They have not always acted with moderation, and no doubt their intervention in the domain of politics during the last century is, in many instances, to be regretted. Priests became tribunes, and were carried to wild extremes during the agrarian crisis of 1880 to 1890. The majority of the clergy, from 1890 to 1895, were leaders of the melancholy campaign against Parnellism, and even to-day the harangues of priests on public platforms are sometimes extravagant, and the ranks of the clergy are rent by political disputes. But here also we must not forget that it is English tyranny which has forced the clergy to adopt a political role by making necessary a series of constitutional agitations of which they had neither the right nor the power to remain indifferent spectators. And there is no impartial judge who does not recognise that on the whole, and in spite of individual excesses, the clergy have done their best to control agitation, to proscribe violence, and to make anarchy feel the weight of their moderating and repressive authority.

A conservative power does not easily become a worker in the cause of progress. If the Irish clergy have

[2] Some priests have, nevertheless, attached themselves personally to the Separatist movement, and even to the physical force movement. It is a curious thing that these priests of the "advance guard" have been, more often, regular than secular priests. A good number of priests took part in the insurrections of 1798 and of 1848.

succeeded admirably in preserving the virtue and piety of their people, they have not had as much success in that other task, with its difficulties of quite another kind, the intellectual and social regeneration of Ireland. There have, however, been many priests who have worked to raise the condition of their flock and succeeded, men like that Father Davis of Baltimore, of whom a minister said, in the British Parliament, that they were "heroes as well as saints." The clergy have worked amongst the most hard-pressed of their people, preaching, above all things, patience and resignation; and absorbed in their mission of peace they have, perhaps, somewhat neglected the task of forming and strengthening character and arming it for the struggle for life. We may ignore those Ultras for whom the Catholic Church is the direct and exclusive cause of all the ills of Ireland.[3] But a Liberal Protestant, Sir Horace Plunkett, would lay the fault at the doors of Catholicism itself, whose tendencies, he thinks, are "non-economic if not actually anti-economic."[4] Need we point out that morality and character must not be confounded with the economic spirit, that religious faith has not for its first purpose in the Catholic mind, as it would seem to have in certain Protestant and Anglo-Saxon minds, the development of worldly energy and the business sense, and that, finally, Catholicism itself cannot be held responsible for the errors and faults of those who may have been its teachers at a certain time and in a certain country? Moreover, it is a strange thing that English Protestants, who were the authors of Ireland's troubles, or Irish Protestants, who were the instruments and the beneficiaries of it, should to-day reproach the people and

3 This thesis has been illustrated by the novelist, George Moore, in *The Untilled Field* (London, 1903), and developed in Mr. Filson Young's recent book, *Ireland at the Cross Roads* (London, 1903). This gross and fanatical theory is not worthy the honour of exposition or discussion. We may be satisfied to remark that it is easy and simple to throw upon Rome the responsibility of Ireland s misfortunes, and thus clear the character of England and of the English colony in Ireland.

4 *Ireland in the New Century*, p. 101-102.

the clergy of Ireland for not having overcome the moral results of oppression. This superior and critical state of mind is no new thing. When, in the year 1749, the philosopher, Archbishop Berkeley, wrote in that curious treatise, *A Word to the Wise*, that he did not know on the earth of a class of men who had power to do so much good, and to do it so easily and with so much benefit to others as the Catholic priests of Ireland, he was writing in that facile fashion which is now adopted by critics of the school of Sir Horace Plunkett. He forgot to ask himself whether the Penal Laws then in operation against the Catholics would not be prolonged by their after-effects right into the nineteenth century, and soon aggravated by the worst of civil and agrarian systems, so as to paralyse in advance all progress in Ireland. We have also to bear in mind the powerful forces which until quite lately were marshalled against the social development of Ireland, and the causes which have made the Irish clergy what they are.

They are of the people. The Penal Laws have left their mark upon them as upon the people; and if these laws are gone, having accomplished their work, England remains face to face with Ireland, isolating her from the outside world and shutting her within the narrow circle of an artificial horizon. The Irish priest has never escaped from that peculiar *milieu*, the depressing influence of which he undergoes; his gaze has never reached beyond the magic circle. The Catholic clergy have never ceased to regard their flock as the object of the snares set by Protestantism; and moreover, they have not behind them, in the exercise of their power, the stimulus of an independent and enlightened public opinion, nor have they any longer that of violent persecution. Accordingly, the clergy, like the people, being absorbed in the struggle against oppression, and waiting for the recognition of their political claims, are slow to follow in the path of social progress. In that charming Father Dan of Canon Sheehan's *My New Curate*, we may note all the

characteristics of a whole generation of Irish priests, a generation that is to-day coming to an end. Father Dan is easy-going, he respects the past, he distrusts what is new. He has tried to do something for his people, but has failed ; and in the end has accepted the inevitable, saying to himself that progress must be slow, and that one cannot in one day undo the work of three hundred years. He has taken for his motto *Quieta non movere*, and he is resigned. "*Cui bono* ? 'Twill be all the same in a hundred years."

It is in the matter of education that the clergy have had reproach most heaped upon them. It is said that they did not show, during the nineteenth century, enough initiative and enough of the progressive spirit. Were they well inspired—we speak only in hypothesis, for the Catholic position in the matter of education is neither doubtful nor disputable—in taking measures to keep Catholics out of Trinity College and the Queen's Colleges, that they might the more surely protect faiths, which were apparently somewhat delicate ? By so doing they almost completely deprived Catholics of any kind of higher education. It must be remembered, too, that, directly or indirectly, the clergy control almost all the primary and secondary education of Catholics, for the reason that there is a lack of educated laymen, and that, moreover, the Church must defend herself against the efforts made in every direction by the official and the officious proselytisers, in primary schools and in propagandist societies. Hence her first step was to denominationalise the primary schools. Monopoly is never a good thing in the realm of education, and there is no denying that public education in Ireland has remained, on the whole, backward and inefficient, at least until recent years. To this we must ascribe the bitter attacks directed against the Irish clergy in their role as educationists, and the more or less open campaign[5] in

5 A campaign analogous to that of the Nonconformists in England, and based upon an idea which Irish or English Catholics, and indeed the Anglicans of England have never been ready to admit : viz., that

favour of the secularisation of education. None the less one must not underrate the services rendered to education whether by the priests as managers of primary schools. or by that admirable order, the Christian Brothers, who, without ever having received a penny from the State, give a truly national education of the first order in their three hundred schools to over thirty thousand scholars. The successes obtained by Catholic Colleges over their Protestant competitors must also be borne in mind. And is not the State itself largely responsible for the weakness of education, when by its programmes and examinations it favours a method of teaching which is badly adapted to the aspirations of the country, and imposes out-of-date methods which are purely mechanical and destructive of talent? For the rest, is it not amusing to see Protestants, and not the smaller fry among them—the Archbishop of Killaloe, for instance, in a speech at a Synod in 1902—recognising the superiority of the Catholic Schools over the Protestant Schools of Ireland? There are, in addition, a great number of Protestants who send their children for choice to Catholic schools; and some ten per cent. of the students on the roll of the Jesuit University College of Dublin are Protestants, not a few of them being, indeed, destined for the ministry.[6]

education belongs to the State. *Cf.* Starkie, *Recent Reforms in Irish Education*, Dublin, 1902.

6 The report drawn up by Mr. Dale (an Englishman and a Protestant), Inspector of the English Board of Education, in pursuance of the enquiry on which he had been sent by the Government upon the system of primary instruction in Ireland, renders full justice to the superiority of primary Catholic schools, and particularly the Nuns' schools. Of the latter he writes: "The order and tone in these schools are generally excellent, a fact which is to be ascribed partly to the very large number of adult teachers employed in them when compared with the ordinary schools, partly to the constant supervision exercised by the members of the community. It is impossible to doubt the admirable influence which the teachers in these schools have over their pupils, and the training which is given in habits of order, neatness and ready obedience. In my broad view of what is involved in the education of children of the poorer classes, these merits, though not capable of being measured with the same definiteness as intellectual proficiency, are not less deserving of recognition." *Report* of Mr. F. H. Dale, Inspector of Schools, *on Primary Education in Ireland*, Dublin, 1904, p. 65 and 66.

However this may be, the Irish clergy would, no doubt, have done more to forward the intellectual and social development of Ireland if they had themselves been better prepared for the task. The great Irish Seminary of Maynooth has always sent out very saintly priests, admirably trained for their spiritual mission, but, until lately at least, Maynooth did not prepare her sons very efficiently for their role as leaders in the highest sense of the word, for that special function which belongs to the promoters of social progress in Ireland. Although sacred studies were of a very high class, profane studies were somewhat neglected. The student was not sufficiently advanced on entrance. The priest left with an excellent ecclesiastical education, but his general knowledge was narrow and incomplete. He was deficient in those qualities which are developed by a good classical and scientific education, and lacked that indefinable thing which, according to the Bishop of Limerick, is "not knowledge but culture." [7] It is not astonishing, then, if the priest, once installed and isolated in his country presbytery, often showed very little intellectual activity and little taste for study, if his library was poor and his pen unfruitful, and if he had little success in the training of mind and character.

Here we should testify also to the progress which Maynooth has realised during the last twenty years, in the way of classical and scientific study, the results of which must in the end have an influence on the Irish clergy in the sphere of social action. Alike in the sciences and in literature, the standard of study has been raised and the number of professors increased. Laymen have been nominated to five or six chairs, and competent persons appointed to deliver series of lectures upon economic and social subjects. An attempt is made to procure for some at least of the clergy the benefits of

7 *Royal Commission on University Education*, 1-21. Dr. O'Dwyer said personally, to the writer, that Maynooth was too large for the purpose of individual formation of characters.

university education which will not only enable the Church, following the desire of Leo XIII., to have worthy representatives in all branches of higher culture, but will also help to bring together priest and people, by promoting friendship between lay and ecclesiastical students. Maynooth being legally incompetent to grant Diplomas except in Theology, sends her priests and future priests up every year to take their degrees in the Royal University of Ireland. Inestimable will be the advantages to the clergy themselves of the establishment of a National University, open to Catholics. Such a university Ireland has never ceased to demand; and some day, perhaps, the Imperial Government will decide to create and endow it in the face of Trinity College, and thus give the world another example of true liberalism.

It is only just to say that all the efforts which have been made in our day to widen the general culture of the priest have contributed largely to the success which recent movements of ideas have met with amongst the clergy. There was indeed in the governing principles of the Gaelic movement, and the new economic movement, much on which the clergy might reflect with profit, and much that might inspire them to a salutary examination of their consciences. Had they, too, not abused politics and placed the agrarian and constitutional claims too high above the need for the inner reform and education of the individual? Had they not unconsciously favoured the progress of Anglicisation by that opportunist spirit which made them always look towards England for every measure of reparation? The fact is, that very soon everything that was youngest and most enlightened in the clergy was touched by the new spirit. Their horizon, changed, grew larger. Their practical activity is directed less and less towards politics, and more and more towards intellectual and social reforms, and the necessary work of national education. It may be that priests are still to be found who dispute the value of a Gaelic revival, or declare that all economic effort must be relegated to

the time which will follow the general purchase of the land or the establishment of Home Rule ; but none the less there has grown up amongst the Irish clergy a new generation, inspired by new ideas very different from those of that older generation, of whom Father Dan in *My New Curate* was such an admirable type. This new generation is active and energetic, neither discouraged nor pessimistic, better educated and furnished with better instruments for its social role than its predecessor, and to-day it is able to give leaders to two great movements of national regeneration.

Precursors have not been wanting even among the clergy. Maynooth, where for nearly thirty years the Irish Language Chair had fallen into neglect, had the honour to train one of the first promoters of the Gaelic revival in the person of Father O'Growney, as it trained one of the principal workers in the movement in the person of Father O'Hickey. These two pioneers replaced Irish in its place of honour at Maynooth, and so it is that for some years past there is not one of the young Levites at the great College of Ireland who is not an enthusiast for the Gaelic language and for the idea of the Gaelic revival. Similarly it is doubtful if anyone has done more to define and propagate the master ideas of the new co-operative movement than the eminent Jesuit, Father Finlay. Throughout Ireland the Christian Brothers have been, side by side with the parish clergy, the pioneers of the new idea. Education is growing more and more Irish in the congregational colleges and convents, which were till lately such centres of Anglicisation, whilst under the patronage of the secular or regular clergy technical education has been everywhere organised. A good number of the Bishops favour the Gaelic movement, for in it they see an ally in the struggle for the faith. A good number, too, are supporters of the new economic movement. The clergy are putting their shoulders to the wheel ; they are founding Gaelic classes and associations, new industries, country banks

and syndicates. At Ballina a country clergyman, Father Quinn, has founded a co-operative hosiery factory. At Castlebar Father Lyons has started an electric power station. At Foxford the Sisters of Charity have established a textile industry, and are realising wonders in the way of raising the condition of the peasantry for miles around. Only the priest and the Sister of Charity can make themselves understood by the peasant, persuade him to break away from his old habits, and make him eager for progress. They alone are understood, because they are known to be disinterested.

With the coming of the new ideas, the clergy have ardently renewed the struggle against the two curses of Ireland, emigration and drunkenness. Against emigration, the cause of which is a deep social and economic fact, but little can be done.[8] The evil can in part be combated, and some check put upon that voluntary emigration which results less from poverty than from the spirit of imitation, the desire for something new, the sadness of rural life. Such emigration the priests combat by preaching of its material and moral risks, and by striving to bind the peasant to the country through the agency of rural clubs, lectures and libraries. The campaign against drunkenness is more active and relatively more easy, and in this field, as everyone knows, a famous Capuchin fought sixty years ago, and achieved a marvellous success by the most radical means, the enrolment of the people *en masse* under the banner of total abstinence. Pamphlets, speeches, congresses, all these methods the Irish clergy distrust; there is but one that succeeds, and that is the pledge, the solemn engagement

[8] The Catholic clergy have often been reproached with having encouraged emigration from rural districts, by preventing with excessive rigour, games, reunions, Sunday dances, thus spreading through the country *a sort of Calvinistic gloom*. The exodus, according to Sir Horace Plunkett (*Ireland in the New Century*, p. 117), is due in part to this feeling that, with a good motive no doubt, the clergy are taking joy—innocent joy—from the social side of the home life. There may be some truth in the reproach, but it is a strange one in the mouths of those who have ever spent a Sunday in Belfast.

of abstinence or of temperance taken collectively and periodically by all the men banded together. To-day these leagues exist all over the country to a greater or less degree. Total abstinence is for the *elite*, temperance for the general mass of the people; and since morals, above all when they are vicious, are much the same in one country as in another, the reader will not be astonished to hear that the most successful league is the Anti-Treating League, the League against treating in the public-house. Each member promises neither to accept nor to pay for treats. Here is a method which might well be imitated in many districts of France. Let us hope that this campaign will achieve a success as great as that of Father Mathew's, but more lasting. It has what Father Mathew's had not, that is to say, organisation; and nothing can take the place of organisation, not even enthusiasm.

VII.—The Future: Anti-clericalism.

There is, surely, hope for the future, now that the first steps in the right direction have been taken. The hour is indeed critical. A democracy needs leaders, and until the Irish democracy has created from itself an *elite* strong, independent, and enlightened enough to direct alone the destinies of the country, the social leadership of Ireland must remain provisionally in the hands of the clergy, as the only capable agents, the only possible pioneers, of those new movements to which the nation looks for salvation. No doubt the mission of God's ministers is not of this world, and the apostles were sent forth to preach the divine law and not human progress to the nations. But can it be denied that there exist in Ireland special conditions, the legacy of a past of suffering, which impose a special duty upon the clergy? They have, besides their spiritual mission, and closely connected with it, a social mission; and this mission it is their duty to

fulfil so long as they have the power. What the Czech clergy did for Bohemia, what the Flemish clergy did for Belgium, the Irish clergy have the power to do for Ireland. Moreover, let them remember this, that whatever is done apart from them, or despite them, may well be done to their hurt. Emigration and Anglicisation, if not checked, may reduce their flock to such a point that one day they will find no faithful left for their care. Are they about to show the adaptability and breadth of mind necessary in the exercise of the delicate duty that falls to them of promoting social progress while at the same time they avoid wounding the susceptibilities of a young democracy, alarming its independence, or awakening its jealousies ? Will they have the energy and perseverance requisite if they are to guide aright the regeneration of a people by means of the education of the individual, and to conquer that inertia of Ireland which, according to Father Dan, nothing in the world can conquer ? In short, will they succeed in their work, and will they be able to restore to Ireland, after the bankruptcy of Protestantism, and so to the greater glory of Catholicism, something of that splendour which the monks had lent to her civilisation in the sixth and seventh centuries ?

In the answer to that question lies the secret of the future. For the moment it cannot be denied that the day is very likely approaching when the Irish democracy, having attained its majority, will demand from the clergy an account of themselves. Anti-clericalism, in the sense in which the word is understood in France, has not so far taken a hold on the people of Ireland, for their faith has roots too profound, and, if one may say so, too national. We shall therefore not apply that term to the hostility, even to this day more political than religious, against the Catholic Church exhibited by the Irish Protestants, or at least by the more noisy among them, with their everlasting cry of " Too many churches," " Too many priests," " Too much wealth." These

Protestants fail to remember that they themselves had not the trouble of building churches because, at the Reformation, they took possession of those of the Irish. They also overlook the fact that the Episcopal Church possesses not only the very considerable capital which Disestablishment handed over to it, but that its clergy is sensibly more numerous than the Catholic clergy in proportion to the number of the laity.[1] On the Catholic side anti-clericalism is confined to a small group of "intellectuals," or self-styled "intellectuals," who naively admire the worst anti-clericals of France, a growing number of agnostics, Voltairians, scoffers, and indifferentists. Then there are some politicians temporarily at war with the clergy on account of political jealousies, and some republican extremists who are more or less avowed partisans of the doctrine of physical force which the Church has always proscribed ; but these are adversaries of the politics of the clergy rather than of the clergy themselves. In fact, anti-clericalism is a small enough affair at present. Ireland, which, owing to the exceptional social power of the clergy, would seem to offer much temptation to the sectaries, is not yet ripe. But undoubtedly the movement has already started and is in progress. What will be the outcome of it ? It will depend to a great extent upon the clergy themselves. When things come to the test the best safeguard of Catholicism in Ireland may be found—*felix culpa*—precisely in the anti-Catholicism of the Anglo-Irish Protestants. And yet an outbreak of anti-clericalism would be a grave menace to the future of the country. This apprehension has been expressed quite recently by an Irish Protestant, in somewhat excessive terms, when he said that if an anti-clerical movement were ever to succeed in Ireland she would run such a danger of moral

[1] There are 3,711 Catholic priests in Ireland to a Catholic population of 3,808,661, that is to say, 1 to 891. The Episcopalians have 1 minister to every 363, and the Presbyterians 1 minister to every 554 members of their respective churches.

degradation that all hope of national progress would be destroyed at a blow.[2]

Ireland needs above all things, if her regeneration is to be achieved, that first of all blessings, religious peace. In religion, above all, war is impious. Peace between Protestants and Catholics, peace between Catholics and anti-clericals, is her most imperative need. May the Protestants of Ireland learn tolerance towards Catholicism and the Catholics, as their brothers in England have learnt it. May the Catholic clergy in their social and public action learn to be liberal as it is their nature to be, and as they would be had it not been for persecution in the past and the constant campaign of Protestant proselytism. Lastly, may the union between priests and people in Ireland be as strong and as confident as it has been during the last two centuries. Only thus may we expect better days, and only thus can the famous and enthusiastic prophecy of Cardinal Newman be realised. "I look," he said, "towards a land both old and young; old in its Christianity, young in the promise of its future; a nation which received grace before the Saxon came to Britain, and which has never quenched it. I contemplate a people which have had a long night, and will have an inevitable day. Thither on to a sacred soil, the home of their fathers and the fountain-head of their Christianity, students are flocking from East, West and South . . . . . all owning one faith, all eager for one large true wisdom; and thence, when their day is over, going back again to carry peace to men of good will over all the Earth."

2. Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland, Appendix III, 233.

CONCLUSION

We have come to the end of our study, and can best conclude with a summary review of the position of Ireland, and of the Irish question as a whole.

Ireland is at a turning-point in her history. Her future —final decay or regeneration—depends upon the direction she takes and the effort she puts forth. The times are critical and her last chance lies upon the board; for as far as one can see, the next ten or fifteen years will settle her fate. Either a new and national Ireland arising with soul re-made, with recovered strength, and faculties of action reorganised, will take her place among the nations, and bring to the world of to-morrow her tribute of material wealth and spiritual wisdom, or the process of a final and fatal decay, making of the *Ile Verte* a dead and empty land, fit only to be a poor-house and a cattle-ranch for the use of England, will issue in the proscription and death of the Celtic race, who will thenceforth be condemned, like the Jews, to wander the world in an eternal exile.

A last battle is raging in every direction between the elements of decay and the forces that make for regeneration. The old oligarchy is fighting desperately on behalf of reaction, but there is within its own ranks a liberal nucleus which tends to rally round the ideas of reform, progress, and conciliation. For all the blind fanaticism of Ulster, the ferment of radical and democratic principles is beginning to change the very nature of Orangeism. The Nationalist Ireland of the people still suffers cruelly from that arrest of social development, which was the result of oppression, and displays a certain lack of culture,

character and independence. But, for all that, she is beginning to shake off the effects of the past. A competent public opinion is in process of formation, the number of free and enlightened minds is growing; Local Government is developing the business sense in public affairs. The Castle regime stands condemned; or at least no one now denies that reform is necessary. The agrarian question is on the road to solution; though we must not forget that there may be many sufficiently serious difficulties to be faced in the future. Theoretically the problem of "Congestion" is solved; but why is the solution not applied? It is true that the over-taxation of Ireland is heavier than ever, and the economic conditions of the country worse. But new economic motive-ideas of great value have come into play; the gospel of self-help, co-operation, technical instruction, and the system of peasant proprietorship have rendered possible an advance the signs of which are already to be seen. Finally, the national idea has received from the Gaelic movement a great and fruitful afflatus. The nation is freeing itself from psychological dependence upon England, and is endeavouring to reconstruct its moral individuality by a return to national traditions and to the language of the past. A breath of union seems to be passing over the country, and without distinction of class, a desire for conciliation and co-operation is little by little supplanting the old spirit of civil war. If religious tolerance is not yet victorious over sectarian fanaticism, the different classes at least seem more disposed to work together for the common good, for the regeneration of Ireland. It seems like the birth of a new soul to Ireland.

What will be the issue of the present crisis, the issue of Ireland's "meditation upon self"? The future is obscure, and man a bad prophet; yet may we not hope that there will come of it all, neither a corpse nor a tomb, but a living nation and a regenerated society? May we not cherish this hope when we see so many symptoms

of new life in an organism that has remained youthful; when we know that it is only minorities who perform great deeds in the history of peoples; when we remember the strength of resistance that Ireland has shown throughout the centuries, the powers of recuperation which she displayed after Cromwell, as after the Penal Laws? One remembers the well-known saying of Curran: "Ireland will not decay until she is ripe, and ripe she certainly is not yet."

No doubt the obstacles in the road of progress will be many. Were they all surmounted, Ireland would then find herself face to face with the great problem of modern society: how to adapt democracy (in the shape of a democracy of peasants) to the new conditions of life and to the struggle-for-life among the nations. The problem, thus stated, is seen to contain within it many an unknown possibility, many a difficulty that can be forecasted. But if Ireland is to re-make herself, and prosper in the remaking, there is one further condition which must be realised, a condition final, if not primordial, and necessary if not sufficient: autonomy. The Irish people do well to regard national autonomy as a right, and the most inalienable of all rights; they are wrong in regarding it as an end. For freedom is merely a means, but it is the only means by which a nation can attain full development, or live out her life in its integrity. At the bottom of the maladies of Ireland, beneath dissension and fanaticism, wretchedness and decay, lies the fundamental fact of foreign domination. "Not foreign government," said Wolfe Tone, "but foreign rule is Ireland's bane." However just or beneficent, foreign law is hateful because it is foreign. What must be the case then, when it is selfish and oppressive, materially and intellectually ruinous? Ireland needs a guarantee against British exploitation. She must be protected against the drainage—mental, moral, economic and financial—that is exhausting her strength. She needs laws and institutions adapted to her customs and aspirations. She needs a strong

government, and a government can be strong only when it is national. So be it! Let the existing regime be reformed, say the Liberal-Unionists, but let the Union be kept and respected. Let Ireland be spared the risks of a freedom for which she has had no preparation. It will be enough to make the Union a reality, to govern the Irish according to Irish ideas, to conciliate them by an intelligent regime of reform and reparation, to do for them wisely and prudently at Westminster what an Irish Parliament, were there one, would do probably in revolutionary fashion at home. Experience unfortunately shows that the profession and the practice of Liberal Unionism have been very different things. Born to political life after 1886, upon the conversion of Gladstone to Home Rule, and the resulting rupture of the Liberal Party, this policy had, for twenty years (with the exception of the short interval 1892-95) a splendid opportunity to apply its doctrines. Home Rule having been rejected, it might have conciliated Ireland by a generous and truly remedial policy, and made of the Rebel Island a Sister Island for all time. But as things turned out, it was not easy to distinguish the Liberal-Unionists, once in power, from the Tories. We will not deny that their influence has counted for something in those measures of concession which Unionist governments have in the last twenty years passed in Ireland's favour, such as their land laws, their legislation for the Congested Districts, their Local Government Act, and the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act. But the political result of it all has been merely to put the essential fact of the situation into clearer relief—the impossibility of satisfactorily governing a country against its will—and to make the necessity for Irish autonomy more apparent, more crying than ever. Is not the evidence of experience conclusive, and is it not vain to hope for better results in the future? One hundred and six years have passed, and there was not one promise held out by the Union but has been belied. The case has been heard: Unionism is condemned.

But we are not therefore driven to the separation of the two countries, and to the idea of an independent Ireland. So long as England remains a great world-power, separation is evidently impossible. "St. George's Channel forbids union, the Ocean forbids separation," said Grattan. For the Irish, Separatism may be the dream and ideal of their hearts, but as a policy, it is to-day impossible.

The Union being condemned and Separatism impossible, a *via media* is required. But what is to be its nature? A federal tie is of value only between States of more or less equal strength, such as the Swiss Cantons or the United States of America. Several small states might indeed be associated with the fortunes of a great state, the latter finding in the former its natural equipoise. Such a federal organisation would be possible and may come between England on the one hand, and, on the other, Ireland, Scotland and Wales,[1] and, perhaps, the British Colonies as well; but it is hardly possible between the two sister isles in their present condition of hostility. Some day, perhaps, a tie of this sort may be created. But what Ireland at present requires and demands is a subordinate autonomy in all properly Irish questions, self-government of the largest possible scope, whatever form it may take or by whatever name it may be called. She stands in need of a National Parliament with a government responsible to that Parliament, the supremacy of the Empire in all Imperial affairs being recognised and assured.

Mr. Gladstone's two celebrated Home Rule proposals of 1886 and 1893 more or less satisfactorily answered this fundamental desideratum. In any case they were accepted by the Nationalist majority without *arrière-pensée*. Since 1870 the demand had been for Home Government, or Home Rule, and not for Repeal pure and

[1] The partisans of Home Rule All Round would like to see separate Parliaments in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, for the control of the internal affairs of each of these countries, the affairs of the Empire only being reserved to the Imperial Parliament.

simple (which would have left no link between Ireland and England but that of the Crown). The two Bills[2] were similar in many respects, though between them there existed profound differences. Both contained many proposals that were open to criticism, or even unworkable, such as those which dealt with the representation (or non-representation) of Ireland at Westminster, and the financial relations of the two countries. Both came into collision, as is well known, with England's chief point of pride, the unity of the Empire, and with her chief subject of anxiety, its security.[3] The first was summarily rejected by the House of Commons ; the second, after passing, by a small majority, through the lower House, was

[2] The Bill of 1886 provided for the establishment in Dublin of an Irish Parliament of two Chambers, sitting sometimes together, sometimes separately. Ireland was to pay the Empire a fixed contribution, a tribute of four million pounds sterling per annum, and she was to have no representation at Westminster. The project of 1893 created in Dublin a Parliament with two separate Chambers. The tribute was replaced by the allocation made to Imperial needs of the proceeds of the customs (plus a temporary subvention). Ireland was to have 80 members at Westminster who should vote on Imperial, but not on English or Scotch questions (this reservation was removed by the House of Commons during the discussion of the measure). The two Bills were alike in the following respects : the creation of a responsible and separate government in Dublin, the creation of an Irish Exchequer, the right of a legislative veto accorded to the Lord Lieutenant, the erection of the Judicial Committee of the English Privy Council into a sort of Supreme Court invested, should the case arise, with the right to annul any Irish legislation contrary to the Constitution, and an exact legal distinction between purely Irish and Imperial questions.

3 Fears relative to the security of the Empire would be quite vain and exaggerated : whilst England has her fleet and an army corps in Ireland, what need she fear ? As to the unity of the British isles, it is not easy to see how any menace in this regard would be increased by the existence of an Ireland conciliated by a scheme of subordinate autonomy. Home Rule, it is said, will lead to separation. But will not the Imperial Parliament retain its supremacy after, as before, Home Rule, and should we not, on the contrary, say that Home Rule must be Great Britain's surest guarantee against Irish separation ? Another chief reason for the rejection was the fear of seeing Ulster, or more generally, the Protestants of Ireland, oppressed by the Catholic and Nationalist majority : a very extravagant fear, for it cannot be denied the Irish Nationalists are free from all sectarian animosity, and are, above all things, anxious to see a United Ireland. Nationalist Ireland has always protested against any project of separating Ulster, under a Home Rule regime, from the rest of the country, by giving her some special status.

contemptuously thrown out by the House of Lords. Home Rule, in short, was conquered by Imperialism. After this double check, it seemed certain that the cause of Irish autonomy was lost for ever; and the more so when, in 1894, it was abandoned by Gladstone's successor, Lord Rosebery. In 1895 the Conservative Party returned to power with a large Unionist majority. "Home Rule is as dead as Queen Anne," cried a Celtophobe and Imperialist in triumph. Mr. Chamberlain did not guess—and who could then guess?—that where this grave was, there would be, ten years later, a resurrection.

While the Nationalists have not ceased to agitate, others also, in Ireland itself, have, of late years, begun to interest themselves in the question of a reform of Government. They belong to that section of the Irish Oligarchy, of whose liberal tendencies and cleavage with the Ultras, we have already had something to say. The Irish Reform Association, a body composed of Unionists, landlords, and men of the middle class, who wished to do something for their country and who were not satisfied with the negative policy of the Conservatives, put forward, in 1904, under the presidency of Lord Dunraven, a programme of reform which, if it did not go as far as Home Rule, yet provided a platform on which the more moderate Unionists and the more moderate Home Rulers might meet. The programme comprised:—(1) The Devolution of Private Bills,[4] and of such other Irish affairs as Parliament should delegate to an Irish deliberative body—the constitution of which remained to be decided[5]; (2) The creation of an Irish Financial Council composed of 24 members, half of whom should be nominated by the Lord Lieutenant and half elected by the people. The function of this Council should be to prepare, control,

4 Bills concerning local or semi-public interests (local authorities, railway companies, etc.). These bills give rise to preliminary enquiries, the cost of which falls upon the interested parties. There has already been a delegation of Private Bill legislation in the case of Scotland.

5 See the plan of a constitution in the *Crisis in Ireland* by Lord Dunraven (London and Dublin, 1905), and the publications of the Irish Reform Association.

and regulate the Budget of Ireland, and in this Budget to dispose, as seemed best in the general interest, of certain funds, to be realised from economies to be effected in the civil service (the cost of which is at present immoderate), and also, perhaps, of other supplies to be decided upon, the use of which should be delegated by Parliament.[6] The rights of the Imperial Parliament were to be completely reserved in all regards.

Naturally, the extreme Nationalists denounced this programme of conciliation or compromise on the spot as being insufficient and inacceptable. It had no resemblance, even the most distant, they said, to the self-government to which Ireland is entitled. They could not, however, fail to perceive and to rejoice at the spontaneous support that had been given to Ireland's demands for autonomy by the demand of the more moderate Unionists for reform.[7] The extreme Unionists on their side received with shrill denunciation a programme which they were pleased to call a "betrayal." To hear them, one would suppose that Devolution was worse than Home Rule and Lord Dunraven more dangerous than Mr. John Redmond or Mr. John Dillon. Such was the commotion that the Government took fright and dismissed their Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Wyndham, who was suspected of having tacitly encouraged the promoters of the Reform Association.

The Unionist Government itself fell, as everyone knows, at the end of the year 1905. The question of Irish Self-

6 For example the Equivalent Grants or the product of land purchase annuities to be recovered from the acquiring tenants. The control of Irish expenditure is actually exercised by the Treasury in London. The germ of these propositions was already to be found in Lord Welby's *Memorandum* to the Financial Relations Commission (*Final Report*, p. 53 *et seq.*).

7 Some moderate Nationalists, led by Mr. William O'Brien, go so far as to support the programme of "Devolution" which they accept as a payment on account of what is due to Ireland; hence the breach between this small conciliatory minority and the official Nationalist Party, a breach which had already commenced in relation to the Land Act of 1903. Mr. William O'Brien has been excluded from the United Irish League, of which he himself was the founder; and as a Member of Parliament he is in opposition to the official Nationalist Party.

Government, helped forward in a subsidiary way by the action of the Irish "Reformists," rose once again in the United Kingdom to the plane of acute actuality, with the coming to power of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and the Liberals, The Liberal majority may indeed be heterogeneous enough to comprise at the same time such Liberals as had remained Home Rulers, and such as had, with Lord Rosebery after 1894, come to regard Home Rule with disfavour. But it cannot escape from the necessity of doing something for Ireland in the direction of self-government. The Prime Minister has given an undertaking to this effect. Doubtless the Liberals will not at the start go so far as to revive, even under another name, full Home Rule. Although English opinion does not seem to be by any means so averse as it was to the idea of Irish self-government, such a step would, at present, meet with very lively opposition within the Cabinet itself. The desire will be to advance gently and by stages. Some compromise will probably be first proposed, some middle term of constitutional reform, some half-measure which, as the Prime Minister has said, will prepare the way for the larger policy, for an ulterior measure of more extended autonomy. Middle courses between the Unionist *status quo* and true autonomy are certainly not lacking. If the Nationalists perceive in the solution proposed a step in the right direction they will have the wisdom to accept it. But it is certain that they will not and could not accept such a solution as a definite and final settlement of their constitutional claims.[8] England must go further, and some day—the sooner the better if she desires an improvement in Anglo-Irish relations—pass a large measure of genuine Home Rule which will give Ireland the control of her internal affairs,

[8] Would Home Rule itself be accepted to-day in the fashion in which it was accepted in 1886 and in 1893? One would not like to say for certain. The more Ireland suffers, the more exigent will she be in her demands and the more difficult to conciliate. "No man," said Parnell on one occasion (and all Ireland thought with him), "has the right to set bounds to the march of a nation."

full security against British oppression and misgovernment, and which will permit the complete development of her nationality. Such a *denouement* is necessary, right, and inevitable. For when Ireland shows, as she has already begun to show, progress realised in the path of regeneration, when in claiming her imprescriptible rights, she gives proof of renascent vigour, it is impossible to think that England will refuse to understand that she has neither motive nor means to withhold autonomy from the Sister Isle any longer, and that in her own interests she must, if there be yet time, endeavour to conciliate her. Should we not see in this new spirit that breathes through Ireland, in those new movements which, by their educative influence, are regenerating at once the individual and the national character, in that desire for an *entente* which now tends to unite class with class in Ireland for the defence of their great national interests, a justification in advance, as it were, of the Emancipation of Ireland? After all, is not Home Rule (call it by what name we will), as has been said, the best of Unionisms? Is it not the most solid basis and the surest guarantee of Anglo-Irish union? England, moreover, cannot always deny to Ireland her rights, nor reserve all her severities for the Sister Isle and all her favours for the Colonies. She cannot always allow the Irish question to remain an open sore, a factor of trouble between herself and that "Greater Ireland," the United States, whose friendship she has so long desired to win. She will not always be able to withstand that law of our times which has evoked, in answer to the Imperialism of great states, a renaissance of the small nationalities, those living symbols of justice and progress that have risen in protest against brute force and the relapse of civilisation into barbarism. Let Ireland, therefore, repeat to herself that, for her, freedom is bound up with regeneration, as consequence with cause, or product with factor. The forces which will gain for her her freedom, if she desires it, are those which will bring to her, if she desires it, moral and

intellectual regeneration, economic and social reform. For the moment we can but say of her, in the great words of Grattan "No, I do not despair of my country. I see her in lethargy, but not in the throes of death. She is not dead, but only sleeping . . . . ."

THE END.

APPENDIX

EDITOR'S NOTES.

P. 116. DEVOLUTION.—The *Irish Reform Association* does not appear to enjoy at present even a nominal existence.

P. 131. UNITED IRISH LEAGUE.—The number of Branches of the United Irish League in August, 1908, was 1,487.

P. 198. POLICE AND CRIME.—The following table gives for 1906 the population, number of police, and number of convictions for indictable offences for Great Britain and Ireland respectively :

— —	Population	No. of Police	Convictions
Great Britain ..	39,273,086	51,462	12,986
Ireland ..	4,386,035	11,144	1,303

The contrast with Scotland is still more striking. The following were the figures for 1906 :—

—	Population	No. of Police	Cost	No. of Convictions
Scotland ..	4,726,070	5,435	£600,000[1]	2,155
Ireland ..	4,386,035	11,144	£1,451,534[1]	1,303

See *Statesman's Year Book*, 1908, p. 15, p. 45. *Parliamentary Paper* No. 215 of Session 1908. *Hansard*, March 26, 1908, p. 1642.

1 These figures are the calculation of Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., founded on the Estimates for 1908.

P. 235. NUMBER AND SIZE OF HOLDINGS.—The following table gives the figures for 1905 and 1906.

Size of Holdings	Number in 1905	Number in 1906	Increase or Decrease in 1905	
			Increase	Decrease
Not exceeding 1 Acre	78,001	80,693	2,692	—
Above 1 and not exceeding 5 Acres ..	62,126	62,256	130	—
„ 5 „ 15 „ ..	154,560	154,228	—	332
„ 15 „ 30 „ ..	134,370	135,133	763	—
„ 30 „ 50 „ ..	74,611	74,753	142	—
„ 50 „ 100 „ ..	57,707	57,827	120	—
„ 100 „ 200 „ ..	22,857	22,837	—	20
„ 200 „ 500 „ ..	8,046	8,056	10	—
Above 500 Acres	1,526	1,561	35	—
Total	593,804	597,344	3,540	—

Agricultural Statistics, 1906, p. xxii.

P. 289. LAND PURCHASE.—M. Paul-Dubois' analysis of the dangerous finance of the Wyndham Act of 1903 has been confirmed by events. It is now admitted on all hands that in this respect the Act has completely broken down. The landlords have continued to receive such enhanced prices, as compared with previous Acts, that if present figures are maintained it will cost 160 millions to buy out their interest, and not 100 millions, as was anticipated by Mr. Wyndham in 1903 (*Report* of Treasury Committee on Land Purchase Finance, February, 1908). On the other hand, Land Stock has been floated at such a discount that if the process be completed at the present terms and rates, the Guarantee Fund, *i.e.*, the Irish ratepayers, will be burdened with a charge of £545,000 a year for 68½ years. (*Cf.* Act of 1903, Secs, 36, 38, 40). In these circumstances the Irish Party demand that the losses on flotation of Land Stock, inasmuch as they result from fluctuations of Imperial credit, shall be met by an Imperial charge. A hot controversy is raging upon the subject, but no decision has as yet been taken by the Liberal Government. In all, agreements for the sale and purchase of Irish land to the amount of £65,000,000 have been signed under the Act of 1903, and about £25,000,000 of the purchase-money has been, up to the present, paid to the landlords. The losses on flotation of Irish Land Stock have so far been met by the Irish Development Grant, a purely Irish Fund which is now almost exhausted. The Bonus is paid for by an increasing annual charge in the Irish Votes, and is, of course, provided not by the British, but by the Irish taxpayer.

P. 319. Trade and Commerce.—One result of the Act of Union was, that, from the date of the amalgamation of the Customs of Ireland and Great Britain (1825) until 1904, no statistics of Irish Exports and Imports were issued or kept. This work is now in the hands of the Department of Agriculture. The following are the figures for 1904, 1905, and 1906 :—

Year	Imports	Exports	Total
	£	£	£
1904	53,185,523	49,398,536	102,584,059
1905	54,793,183	51,174,318	105,967,501
1906	56,365,299	55,598,597	111,963,896

It should be noted that practically the entire volume of Irish external trade is with Great Britain. Direct Irish trade with foreign countries is only 1.5 per cent. of that of the United Kingdom as a whole. As a result of the shifting of the commercial centre of gravity of Ireland to London, practically all the agencies of transit between Ireland and Great Britain are in English hands. The newspapers have just announced (September, 1908) the formation of what is practically a Transit Trust between all the great English Companies concerned, except the *Great Western*, as regards their carrying trade with Ireland. For the early history of Irish industrial and commercial development see *The Making of Ireland and its Undoing*, Mrs. J. R. Green, London, 1908.

As to present industrial conditions see Thom, *Directory of the Manufacturers and Shippers of Ireland.* Kevin J. Kenny, *Irish Manufacturers' Directory and Year Book* (Dublin, 1908.) See also *The Irish Year Book* issued by the National Council (Sinn Fein), Dublin, 1908. Sydney Brooks, *The New Ireland.* "Pat." *Economics for Irishmen*, Dublin, 1907.

P. 335. Over-Taxation.—M. Paul-Dubois' luminous treatment of this subject is founded for the most part on the *Report* of the Financial Relations Commission 1894-6. But in the interval the problem has become much more acute, and the burden, both absolutely and relatively, has become much heavier upon Ireland. In the brief space at our disposal only the barest summary can be given of the figures which prove this proposition conclusively. Since 1894 the population of Ireland has fallen by more than two hundred thousand ; that of Great Britain has increased by more

than five-and-a-half millions. There has been an enormous increase in the wealth of Great Britain but no corresponding increase in that of Ireland. Judged by the yield of the income-tax, the taxable capacity of Ireland in 1894 was about 1-22 of that of Great Britain ; judged by the same test in 1908 it is less than 1-30. If we take 1 : 24 as representing the present relative incomes of Ireland and Great Britain—an estimate far from liberal to Ireland—Ireland ought to have contributed last year 4 per cent. (or one-twenty-fifth) of the total Revenue of the United Kingdom. As a matter of fact she contributed 6.29 per cent. or more than one-sixteenth. On the basis of these figures she ought to have contributed in 1907-8 a total revenue of £6,120,000. As a matter of fact she paid £9,621,000 ; in other words she was over-taxed to the amount of £3,501,000. The strangest thing about the present fiscal arrangement is, that, while ruinous to Ireland, it is not profitable to the British Empire. The " Imperial Contribution " of Ireland in 1894 was actually £150,000 more than in 1908. The explanation of this is to be found in the fact that in the interval the cost of her home government has increased by more than £2,000,000. This increase has been eaten up by a horde of Government officials. A comparison with Scotland exhibits this in a very striking light.

Scotland at present has a larger population than Ireland. But of Government officials assessed for income-tax, there are in Scotland 963, in Ireland 4,539. Their salaries are in Scotland, £311,694 ; in Ireland, £1,412,520. (Assessment for income-tax means that the salary of the official in question exceeds £160 a year.)

The following table gives the comparative figures of Revenue raised, and cost of home government in Ireland in 1893-4, and 1907-8 :—

Year	Total Revenue raised in Ireland	Population	Cost of Home Government	Profit to British Empire
1893-4	£7,568,649	4,600,599	£5,602,555	£1,966,094
1907-8	£9,621,000	4,378,568	£7,810,000	£1,811,000

The Revenue *per capita* has risen from £1 12s. 10d. in 1893-4 to £2 3s. 11d. in 1907-8, and the cost of Home Government from £1 4s. 4d. to £1 15s. 7d.

For official figures on all these matters see *Parliamentary Papers* No. 215 and No. 216 of Session 1908. *Hansard*, March 26, 1908.

P. 354. EMIGRATION.—The decline in the figures of Emigration from 1901 to 1905 has not been maintained. The number of emigrants from Ireland in 1905 was 31,172; in 1906, 35,918; and in 1907, 39,562. In 1907 Ulster was the heaviest loser by emigration of the four Provinces. The figures were:—Ulster, 14,513; Munster, 11,288; Connaught, 7,570; and Leinster, 5,711. The estimated population of Ireland on June 30, 1907, was 4,378,568. The following table shows the population of Ireland and Scotland in 1841 and 1901 respectively:—

Year	Scotland	Ireland
1841	2,620,184	8,175,124
1901	4,472,103	4,458,775

P. 362. POOR RELIEF.—The following table shows the number of persons who received Poor Relief, indoor or outdoor, from 1903 to 1906:—

Years	No. of Persons
1903	452,241
1904	488,654
1905	558,814
1906	562,269

A complete re-organisation of the Poor Law System is promised before 1911 as a complement of the Old Age Pensions Act of the present year.

P. 379 *et seq.* UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.—These pages are of merely historical interest, since the passage of the *Irish Universities Act* in August of the present year (1908). This Act provides for the establishment of two new Universities, with their centres respectively at Dublin and Belfast. The Belfast University is to have but one constituent college, the old Queen's

College, re-modelled and with an increased endowment. The University with its centre at Dublin is to be a federal institution, consisting of a new Metropolitan College to be established in Dublin, with the Queen's Colleges of Cork and Galway, also re-modelled and with increased endowments. Both Universities are to be free from religious tests. The scheme, while criticised on the ground of insufficient endowment and on other points, has been accepted by the leaders of Irish opinion as giving Ireland freedom to develop her intellectual resources, and to create a living centre of national culture. The scheme is, in its main lines, based on a proposal put forward some three years ago by Mr. John Dillon, M.P.

P. 381. Royal University of Ireland.—In 1906, 3,733 students presented themselves for the Examinations of the Royal University.

P. 404. The Gaelic League.—In the present year (1908) the Gaelic League has 890 Branches. Its annual income is about £6,000. The average membership of each Branch is about 70. There are 180,384 children learning Irish in the Primary Schools, and 3,898 in the Secondary Schools. The literary output in Modern Irish is so large that it is not possible here to give even a brief Bibliography.

P. 445. Politicians and Co-Operation—It is only right to point out that several Nationalist Members of Parliament are members of one or other of the elective Committees and Boards which form part of the mechanism of the Department of Agriculture ; and that certain of them, such as Mr. J. P. Boland, M.P., and Mr. Hugh Law, M.P., have rendered valuable service to the co-operative movement.

P. 447. The Co-Operative Movement—As compared with the figures in the text there were last year (1907) 953 Co-Operative Associations in Ireland, with a membership of 95,000,representing a population of 450,000, or one-tenth of the whole population of Ireland.

Co-operative dairies have increased from 328 to 356 ; Rural Banks from 200 with 11,194 members, to 270 with 16,000 members ; Agricultural Societies from 131 to 172 (these Societies do not now attend to the breeding of cattle) ; and Societies of other kinds from 116 to 131. The trade turnover of the societies now amounts to over two millions-and-a-half sterling and is steadily increasing.

P. 461. THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION.—On this subject consult *Catholicity and Progress in Ireland*, by Very Rev. M. O'Riordan, D.D., now President of the Irish College, Rome (London and St. Louis, Mo, 1905), a reprint of a series of powerful articles from *The Leader*, Dublin.

P. 520. DEVOLUTION.—The *Irish Councils' Bill* of the present Liberal Government was summarily and contemptuously rejected by the unanimous vote of the Irish National Convention of May, 1907.

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